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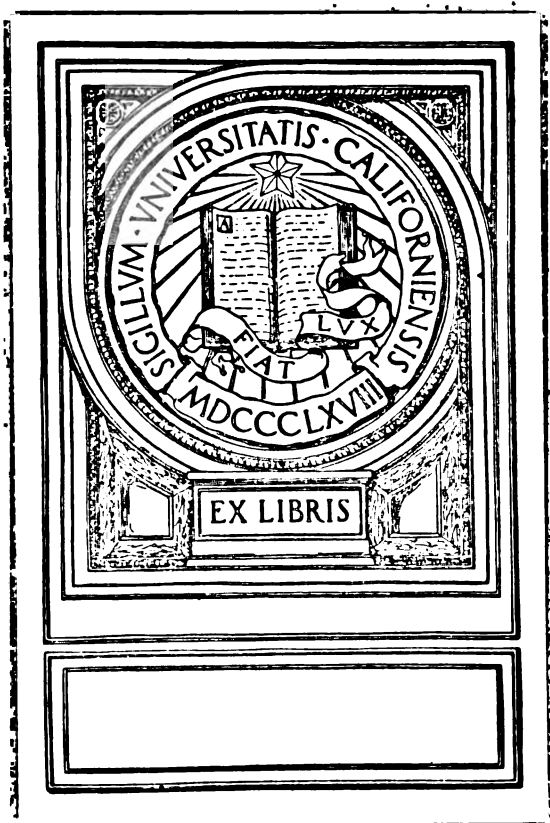
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**PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS OF THE  
DUC DE BROGLIE.**



*Personal Recollections of*  
**PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS of**

*Duc De Broglie*

OF THE LATE

**DUC DE BROGLIE.**

1785—1820.

Translated and Edited

BY

**RAPHAEL LEDOS DE BEAUFORT.**

*'Ecce enim breves anni transeunt et semitam per quam non revertetur ambulo.'*

*JOB xvi. 23.*

*WITH A STEEL PORTRAIT AND AN AUTOGRAPH OF THE DUC  
DE BROGLIE.*



IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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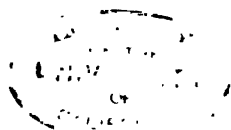
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1887.

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## PREFACE OF THE PRESENT DUC DE BROGLIE TO HIS FATHER'S 'RECOLLECTIONS.'

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THIS volume, which closes the 'Recollections' left by my father, stops at the very moment when, owing to the death of the illustrious Casimir Perier, a new Cabinet was on the point of being formed, in which the author of these 'Recollections' was called upon to play the principal part. Death prevented his bringing them down to a more recent period.

It seems to me that he had himself foreseen, not without some regret, that he should not be allowed to terminate the faithful and sincere picture which he intended to draw of his public life. I, indeed, found in his papers an unfinished note bearing the date of the last year of his life, and in which, whilst recording the progress he had made with the various works which occupied his old age, he dwells complacently on those 'Biographical Recollections,' in order to explain the reasons that induced him to collect them, and to point



out the value he would have attached to their completion. The following are some extracts from that note, the touching gravity of which cannot fail to be appreciated :

UN OCTOGÉNAIRE PLANTAIT.

*(An Octogenarian was Planting.)*

‘ I am completing to-day (October, 1868) my eighty-second year. Although the infirmities usual at my age have spared me up to the present, and nothing seems to forebode my imminent end, it cannot be far off ; and although I do not feel the symptoms of decay, I am fully aware that death cannot long delay overtaking me. I cannot, therefore, hope to bring to a close the various works with which I have been engaged in turn during the last thirty years of my life ; yet, although I do not entirely give up that hope, I deem it wiser and more sensible to subject them as they are to a strict revision, so as to leave definitely that which seems true to me in those particulars which I relate, and to indicate the various points which appear to me to admit of a fresh interpretation. . . .

‘ In 1857, when more than seventy years old, I made up my mind to carry out the scheme I had long cherished, though until then always delayed, of col-

lecting those *memorabilia*, of co-ordinating them for my private benefit, and rather as an examination of conscience than as an apology for my past life. What little I have done does not require any apology. Those recollections have not been written as the pastime of an old man idle and free from illusion. Thank God, I have not come to that, and I am not at a loss how to make use of my time ; I regard life as a good thing, and so long as I have any strength left, I will contrive to remain a man to the last, and to turn to useful and honourable account whatever strength and activity I may still retain.

‘That is why I do not consider as void of interest either the circumstances of my public life, or various incidents in my domestic life. What I saw with my own eyes, the events for the successful issue of which I worked, indeed the very feelings which the spectacle of things and my intercourse with men aroused in me, may not be altogether indifferent to my relatives, to my friends, and, perhaps, . . . to other people. “*Tout sert en ménage*,”\* says the proverb ; history is like the Little Sisters of the Poor (“*petites sœurs des pauvres*”†), who

\* A French proverb, which may be rendered thus : ‘A good housewife turns everything to useful account.’

† The name of a Roman Catholic order of nuns.

do not allow anything to be wasted, but make use of everything.

‘I have mentioned, as concisely as I could, the date and place of my birth, the position of my family, the teachings I received from my parents, my masters, and also from events—our own masters. I have explained, in a cursory manner, how and why, at an early age, I entered *de minimis* the councils of the first Empire.

‘I have related the manner in which all business matters, important or insignificant, were conducted in those councils; how all personages, great and small—and amongst them were to be met all sorts of people as regards both ability and birth—conducted themselves.

‘How, after our victories, and in my official capacity as administrator of the various provinces successfully won and lost by our arms all over Europe, I endeavoured, in my humble sphere, to spare the vanquished by urging reason on the conquerors.

‘How, later on, after a series of disasters, I found myself, suddenly, and merely owing to the name I bear, called upon to play a foremost part in the new order of things.

‘How, in that new position, I strove for fourteen

years, either as one of the leaders of a moderate opposition, or as the supporter of enlightened Ministers, to establish with them a free and regular Government.

‘How, in short, having been involved, much to my regret, in a revolution which I did not desire, I had to submit to the risky obligation of becoming one of its servants; for a very short time, it is true, and not in a very exalted position, though I had soon again to bear the dangerous burden of that obligation.

‘That portion of my recollections I have brought to a successful issue; but the heaviest share in my task—that is, that to which I attach the greatest importance—still remains to be done. I have still to relate the incidents of my second Parliamentary campaign, this time in the capacity of Minister of Foreign Affairs (1832-1833), and the reasons which induced me once more to retire; I have to relate the incidents connected with my third Parliamentary campaign, not only as Minister of Foreign Affairs, but as “*Président du Conseil*,” or Prime Minister, as they would say in England (1834-1836), and to give an account of the motives which led to my resigning for the third time.

‘In short, I have still to relate the motives which induced me at that time, although I was scarcely more

than fifty years old—that is, in the full maturity of my age—to retire voluntarily altogether from public life, and to seek, in future, in a life of purely intellectual and active studies, pursuits better fitted to the ways of my mind and to the frame of my character. Seeing, however, that that resolution—which I scrupulously and faithfully carried out—did not, at the time, secure the approbation of my family, of my friends, and, if I may say so, of my companions in arms through the vicissitudes of public life, several amongst them having even done me the honour of believing and of saying that, had I assumed the direction of public affairs when occasion offered—which occasion, indeed, offered in many instances—my experience might have proved useful during the closing years of the last Government,\* I am anxious to express fully my views on the matter: those views might eventually prove useful to others in similar circumstances. . . .’

It is that second portion of his ‘Memoirs’ which my father had not even the time to begin.

\* Louis-Philippe’s Government.

## AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

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I WILL not give these volumes the imposing title of 'Mémoires,' still less am I inclined to call them 'Confessions,' a rather dangerous term. In order that the story of one's private life, one's errors and faults, one's struggles and miseries, may be edifying to others, one must be a Saint-Augustine. There is even no harm in supposing that the writings of a great doctor are not always read in the spirit which dictated them, and that some morbid curiosity impels people to seek in such writings precisely that which their author deplores. One must be a Rousseau to take delight in relating things which he relates and to boast of such candour. I agree with Rousseau, and am prepared to emphasise his claim, that, even after reading his work, no man, on the day of judgment, will be justified in saying, 'I was better than the author of the "Confessions;"' although that is a reflection which ought to make us blush inwardly.

As for 'Memoirs'—however slightly one may have been connected with public affairs—one can hardly, when writing his own, avoid trespassing, in a certain degree, upon those of other people; the writer is thus placed in the alternative position of either offending the living, or of judging the dead without a hearing. I intend to clear that double breaker by making it a point not to write history, but to confine myself to collecting for my own self, for my relations, and for a narrow circle of intimate friends, the reminiscences left to me of a long and active career. During my public life, which extended over more than forty years, I never shunned or courted popularity, and now as a private individual I no longer require it. If, therefore, contrary to all expectations, this work should fall some day into the hands of people for whom it was not intended, I, beforehand, warn them that they will not find in it any of those disclosures which, nowadays, are so much to the public taste.

I have lived more than seventy years. I have passed through more than one period of disorder, disaster, and crime; and God has spared me neither trials nor reverses; thanks to Him, however, I never ignored the wisdom of His ways or the excellence of His works.

I am fond of life ; *je l'aime et la cultive*,\* like Montaigne, *telle qu'il a plu à Dieu nous l'octroyer*.† I enjoyed it in my childhood, in my youth, in riper years ; I still sweetly enjoy it with gratitude in my old age. I do not regret anything which time has taken from me. I feel that, in the course of a long life, we really gain more than we lose, and that, when endeavouring to be of his age and time, *à mesure que l'homme extérieur se détruit, l'homme intérieur se renouvelle*.‡

These recollections will therefore be found to incline neither to the side of misanthropy nor to that of despondency, they will not tell of satiety of life or contempt of worldly goods. They will not even be tinged with that shade of restrained sadness and manly resignation with which Gibbon was overcome towards the close of his work and the evening of his life. For, unlike him, I have not built any lasting monument from which my heart finds it hard to dis sever itself.

Being issued from a justly esteemed family, and related by marriage with a justly celebrated one, I was thus called upon to rank at home or abroad with the *élite* of society ; my familiars were all my superiors, both in learning and in wisdom, and to them

\* I love and cultivate it. † Such as it pleased God to grant it.

‡ As the outer man decays, so the inner man may be renewed (Prayer Book).



I owe what little I am worth. As the leader of a moderate opposition, as Minister and as Prime Minister, I was abused, caluminated, and insulted, just as much and perhaps less than others; yet those abuses, calumnies, and insults never reflected upon the personal regard in which I was held, and people always thought a great deal more of me than I did myself. Although I have met with adversaries, I am not aware of having made one single enemy. Friends I have had—I still, thank God, possess some—whose affection is dear to me, and who rendered me eminent services. Seeing, therefore, how blessed I have been in my domestic relations, I would be inexcusable were I to think ill of men in general and to slander any in particular.

Should the following record of the various circumstances of my life excite any interest, that interest will only proceed from its very simplicity, its faithfulness, I might almost say its ingeniousness. Life has nothing more in store for me; my cause, that of honest and sensible people, is apparently lost for a long time to come; what good I anticipate from it will only benefit my children. In all that relates to honour, to personal and political probity, my conduct needs no defence or explanations; I have lived long enough, I have often enough witnessed the failures of the shrewdest and

most skilfully laid schemes not to prize such conduct before everything else.

I will be exact in my statements. Yet, in order to be really exact, it is not always sufficient to intend to be so; it is necessary to possess a good and reliable memory. One must, above all things, guard against the *very French* impulse which leads Frenchmen, in order to obtain the effect which they most desire, to slightly misrepresent events for no other reason but the pleasure they feel in doing so, provided such misrepresentations do not injure anybody.

I will endeavour to avoid that sort of inaccuracy, quite esthetic, if I may say so, by binding myself rigidly to a chronological and personal order, step by step—that is, from year to year,—following my recollections. I will mention only matters with which I have been connected, and speak only of the men whom I saw at work. I will confine myself, as far as possible, to giving my impressions of the time, merely correcting in them whatever experience and reflection taught me to consider as wrong and inaccurate. In short, (and that will be the whole extent of my poor merit), I will say: ‘I was there; such a thing happened to me.’ Only a master could say: ‘You may fancy you were there yourselves.’





## PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS OF THE DUC DE BROGLIE.

*BOOK IV.—Continued.*

### III.

1820.

ABOUT five weeks elapsed between December 6, 1819, the day on which Grégoire was expelled from the Chamber, and February 13, 1820, the day on which the Duc de Berri was murdered. Although the political horizon was full of storms, these five weeks passed, if not peacefully, yet without much noise. The Congress of the German Powers, which had met again, not at Carlsbad, but at Vienna, created no sensation, and seemed to be pre-occupied solely by its own affairs. M. de Serre was so ill that it was found necessary to send him to Nice; I myself was ordered by the doctors not to speak, and they hinted that I should go to Eaux-

Bonnes ; the great measure was thus left in a state of suspense ; our force was altogether rather too crippled to undertake an assault.

In the midst of these perplexities, these alternatives, and of these different preoccupations, the 13th of February burst over our heads.

I am not going to give an account of the Duc de Berri's murder. On that day, Quinquagesima Sunday, I was not at the opera, where, indeed, I went but rarely ; quite by chance, none of us were present, either at the ball which Marshal Suchet gave, or at Madame de Briche's fancy-dress ball. The account of that fatal evening is to be found everywhere, and everywhere adheres to the truth ; M. de Vaulabelle differs in no particular from M. de Chateaubriand, and the newspaper which is now before me contains nothing which they do not relate.

The blow was struck at eleven o'clock at night ; we were not told of it till eight o'clock the next morning. The Prince had just died. The crime was an inexhaustible subject for numberless reflections and measureless emotions ! He had been carried into the small saloon which is outside the royal box, still holding in his hand the dagger which he had pulled out of his own breast. He received the first care of medical skill, and the last

consolations of religion, amidst the noise of the wild dancing which terminates the Carnival of Venice. A few yards from there, laid upon the bed of a hired menial, and, strange to say, on the very bed on which, the year before, on arriving from Boulogne, he had taken some repose, he recommended his two natural daughters to the care of his wife, whose lace robe was covered with his blood, and begged for mercy towards his murderer; it was on his knees at the side of this wretched couch, surrounded by his family, that the old King closed the eyes of the dying Prince with his own withered hands; it was in the next room that M. Decazes, whilst questioning the culprit, was interrupted by explosions of hatred hurled against him; and at the same time, from ball to ball, from masquerade to masquerade, a flood of people, Royalists and their opponents alike, were giving themselves to the diversions of the day and of the hour.

One might have taken it for some grand scene from Shakespeare, and, to complete the simile, this cruel scene constituted the terrible issue to a situation which had become insupportable for everyone, and which did not seem susceptible of a regular solution for either of those concerned.

On the 14th, about one o'clock in the afternoon,

the Chambers met, each in its own place, to receive the sorrowful communication of the event, which since daybreak had spread consternation through all hearts ; a sort of fool, called Clauzel de Coussergues, struck the first blow. He impudently accused M. Decazes of being an accomplice of the murder of the Duc de Berry, an accusation which, the next day, on the demand of his party, he reduced to a simple accusation of high treason.

On the 15th, at five o'clock in the evening, the Ministry presented to the Chamber of Peers a Bill for placing newspapers and periodical publications under a censorship again, and, to the Chamber of Deputies, a Bill for suspending individual liberty, besides the famous Electoral Bill, which had been remodelled by experts.

Of course, I was not consulted about all this ; but instead of congratulating myself on this circumstance, instead of making allowances for the circumstances and for the terrible position in which M. Decazes found himself placed, I was foolish enough to get angry, and to write a violent letter to M. de Serre, asking him to resign. I had no sooner sent it than I recovered myself, and did not hesitate to show my very lively and sincere interest in M. Decazes.

The struggle between the King and the Royal

Family during the five or six days which followed February 15, the efforts of the King to retain his favourite Minister, those of the Royalist Party to remove the latter from him, the fits of rage of that party, the menacing attitude of the Court, the dignified and courageous bearing of M. Decazes, are related everywhere, and tolerably correctly, except the anecdote which M. Vaulabelle inserts in the fourth volume of his work. I have never heard anyone say that M. de Vitrolles, the day after the murder, forced the door of the Count d'Artois in order to propose to him to marry the Queen of Etruria, and to adopt the son of that Princess to the prejudice of the Orleans branch ; that is the kind of gossip with which party credulity is kept amused.

This political agony, after the real death agony, this fight for influence over a dead body, between the sickly affection of an infirm King and the ascendancy of the heir-presumptive, who held in his hand the blood-stained shirt of his son, could not last long. Louis XVIII. gave way by dismissing his dear child *invitus invitum*, continuing, however, to write him three affectionate notes daily. M. de Richelieu again became President of the Council, *invitus invitum* ; he allowed himself to be hoisted, as it were, to power, on the faith of promises



which the Count d'Artois could not keep, even supposing that he meant to do so. The old Simeon, flanked by M. Mounier as Director of Police, and by M. Capelle, who succeeded M. Guizot as *directeur des communes*, took for himself the Ministry of the Interior from the spoils of M. Decazes. M. Mounier was the bosom friend and confidant of M. de Richelieu; M. Capelle, the servant, the factotum of the Count d'Artois; M. Pasquier retained the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, and the rest of the Ministers shared between them what remained of the Ministerial posts.

All this was mere outside show; the Ministry was rather tolerated than well received; the extreme violence of the extreme parties created an intermediate party for it, which was more apparent than real, and whose bond of union was the common fear, each naturally making its own reservations, and preserving its liberty of speech.

I read in the newspaper already quoted :

· 'The general cry is, that the Ministry must be supported for fear of the *ultras*; as to liberty, no one thinks any more about it. No voice is raised in favour of the liberty of the press. This is a cruel discouragement; there is much to fear, and, above all, nothing more to hope for; liberty terrifies us, at the least

attempt. Frenchmen always seem to say, "Let us be free and talk no more about it;" but men are free in order to talk about it, in order to struggle, to fight. This weak, miserable Ministry is received well enough on all sides; a puff would overthrow it, but everyone holds his breath, for fear of destroying the last means of safety. The victors themselves are afraid of their victory. Everyone feels that the struggle will be terrible, and, by tacit consent, they agree to put it off. M. de Villèle and M. de Corbière complain loudly of their party; men are frightened of everything, even of themselves . . . . "If you only knew," those gentlemen said to M. de Castellane, "what it is to work with these men, and the trouble it is to make them understand anything like common sense."'

The small Doctrinaire Party, enrolled, whether it liked it or not, in the great Ministerial Party, attached to the Ministry by an official link, since most of its members were Conseillers d'Etat, proposed to itself, as a rule of conduct, to reassume that position of friendly independence which it enjoyed in 1818. I led the way, and I hoisted our colours on the 26th of February, thirteen days after the murder of the Duc de Berri, and five days after the formation of the second Ministry of M. de Richelieu. I attacked the re-establishment of the

ensorship; my speech was thought firm, sensible, moderate, and was generally approved, even by the Ministry; I distinctly defended the Press Law as it had been carried the previous year, whilst making allowances for the circumstances; I conceded nothing to reaction.

This example was followed in the Chamber of Deputies, where the law on the censorship which had been adopted by the Chamber of Peers on the 18th of February was passed on the 1st of March.

Camille Jordan opposed it vehemently, and it was on that occasion that M. Royer-Collard uttered the phrase which has remained famous: 'Laws of exception are usurious loans.'

The debate on the Electoral Laws opened on the 15th of May, and M. Royer-Collard and General Foy carried off all the honours of it. M. Royer-Collard's speech was very fine, and delivered in his loftiest style. What can be more admirable than such passages as these?

'The difference between the sovereignty of the people and the constituted sovereignty of Liberal Governments is that in the first there exists nothing but persons and individual wills; in the other nothing but interests and rights. Individualities disappear; every-

thing is raised from particulars to general ; the whole of society is identified with its Government ; there, and there alone, sovereignty resides, because there, and there alone, interests have their agencies, and rights their safeguards.

‘ Inequality is the result of great superiorities of all sorts : glory, birth (which is nothing but the perpetuating of glory), riches, as far as they are, like glory, a dignity, a power, and an empire exercised over men.

‘ What is the Chamber of Peers except a recognised and consolidated inequality, raised up to be a social power, and thus rendered inviolable. It is an admirable artifice by which vanquished privileges have been transferred from that society which they oppressed to the Government, which they strengthen. It is a magnificent prerogative, which inequality has not received for itself, nor for its own defence alone, but for the protection of the whole of society, because superiority of rank having nothing to wish for but to maintain its position, the power where it is concentrated becomes the principle of stability and the pledge of joint existence.’

This speech had a great effect, in spite of being, as usual, rather too metaphysical. In the newspaper which is before me I find the following passage :

‘ Royer-Collard has spoken to the Chamber with much

force.' M. de Rémusat said to me: 'It is a very strong and very hostile speech against the Government.' It is true that M. de Rémusat is rather an admirer of M. Royer-Collard; he is singular in his tastes; he likes pedantry as others like grace.

General Foy, whose reputation, which was then quite recent, was increasing daily, was, in a measure, quite the opposite to a pedant. His mind was prompt, quick, ingenious; he understood from a mere hint, and grasped everything in a moment; his character was brilliant and generous; his eloquence, which was rather laboured, was rich in turns and figures; everyone liked and honoured him; his only real defect was a thirst for popularity, which led him into false steps, for which, the moment afterwards, he pulled out the few hairs he still had upon his head.

He had naturally taken the place which I had given up, that of intermediary between the Liberal and the Doctrinaire Parties, a post which I regretted occasionally; because by identifying myself thoroughly with the party of ~~which~~ I now was a member, I only felt its defects all the more.

Here is what a good judge, who had no ill-will towards it, says about it:

'It is not wrong to call the Doctrinaires revolutionary

metaphysicians. They are revolutionary from moral, no ways from political opinions ; they have too much sense to wish for what is unpracticable ; but they are Jacobins by reflection, who reject the old views, just as the Jacobins of 1789 rejected titles and privileges, and they wish to make a clean sweep in philosophy, just as the others wished to do in politics. This causes them to be obscure. They have a profound dislike for all conventional ideas. This is the reason why they give so much offence, because people like new ideas when they are the development of those which one holds already. But these ideas, which come with drums beating and swords drawn, upsetting everything that has existed in order to take its place, these ideas put everyone into a rage. The Doctrinaires do not apply the motto of the Revolution—*Otes-toi de là, que je m'y mette*—to persons ; but they apply it to principles, and that also furnishes an element of discord.'

In the general debate, M. de la Fayette went into the tribune three times. He had written his principal speech, for fear that it should be found too violent. The effect was only the worse for it ; there was something noble and imposing in his manners, an accent of the *ancien régime*, which contrasted strangely with the revolutionary ideas and expressions with which his

language was stamped. But it was in the debate upon the clauses that the real debate began.

Camille Jordan, who was dying, had dragged himself to the tribune, and M. de Serre, who was not in a much better state of health, had hurriedly returned from Nice. It was between these two friends, both with one foot in the grave, both eloquent, sincere, liberal, devoted to the monarchy, both free from any mental reservation which might go beyond their words, that the Chamber had to decide.

Camille Jordan had proposed to maintain the law of February 5, 1817, by dividing the election by *arrondissements*; all the Left and the Left Centre rallied to that amendment.

The position of the speaker, said M. de Vaulabelle, lent a great deal of interest to the speech. No member of the Chamber had given to the Bourbons and to the monarchy more striking proofs of fidelity. He was a Royalist like M. Royer-Collard, his friend and political companion, had been prosecuted and proscribed as a monarchist, when several present Ministers and even some members of the Right were in the ranks of the Revolution, his life was without blemish or contradiction. Devoured by illness, he was inclining towards the grave. Seeing in these new measures the beginning of a re-

actionary policy which would be fatal to that royalty to which he had devoted his life, and wishing to arrest it in this fatal descent, he summoned up his strength, went to the Chamber with difficulty, and mounted the tribune ; his pale and wasted features, his stooping attitude, his weak and broken voice, the undeniable tokens of the approaching end, gave to his words that solemn and almost prophetic character which is attached to the accents of the dying.

Nothing could be more true than his speech, and, besides that, it was very clever and eloquent ; but the historian, if he had been worthy of his name—that is, of his profession—ought to have borne the same testimony to M. de Serre, or, rather, to be faithful to the truth, he ought to have allowed that M. de Serre's reply was as much above that of Camille Jordan for loftiness of style, extent, and solidity of views, for the vigour of its oratorical efforts, as the eloquence of a statesman is above that of an empty orator.

This was only the beginning of scenes of a still deeper interest, and more worthy of admiration.

The amendment of Camille Jordan having gained the priority by a majority of one, and only having been rejected by a majority of five, the Chamber was exactly divided into two almost equal parties, and the



fate of each vote depended on the presence or the absence of this one or that one. Deputies who were ill had themselves carried into the tribune, and, in order to reach the Chamber, passed in their carriages through the compact masses who covered the Place de la Concorde, that of the Palais Bourbon, and extended tolerably far into the Tuileries, on to the quays, and along the boulevards. They were greeted with hoots or with cheers, according to the nature of the groups which they met during their progress—groups where, on one side, the most ardent were the young men from the different public schools, and on the other the body guard and the officers of the royal guard, dressed in mufti. Before long these groups proceeded to acts of violence towards each other, and the deputies, as they entered or left, came in for their share of blows ; it then became necessary to intervene by force of arms. This led also to scenes of violence. As always happens, the violence was blind, and a poor young student who was altogether blameless was left dead on the pavement.

After that the inside of the Chamber of Deputies became like the outside, a regular scene of conflict. During the last days of the debate, the half of each sitting resounded with shouts, vociferations, recrimina-

tions, and furious personal attacks. Each deputy carried into the tribune the recital of the tumult of the previous day, demanded vengeance for the insults and the ill-treatment he had received, and, not without excellent reasons, laid the blame on the whole Ministry.

M. de Serre, who was nearly dying, was the only Minister present. Being forsaken by the Right, which hated him as a deserter from the camp of the *émigrés*, and which, besides, could more easily find ruffians and cudgels in the streets than orators and arguments in the tribune ; being abandoned by the rest of the Ministry, in the midst of which his return had sown discord, and which gladly hid behind him ; attacked by the Left with unheard-of violence ; exposed, and rightly, in more than one respect, to the indignation of his best friends—he braved everything and everybody with a degree of intrepidity, coolness, energy, presence of mind and fitness which have perhaps never been equalled, and have never been surpassed, in any deliberative assembly ; giving back blow for blow, reason for reason, sarcasm for sarcasm, invective for invective—it was an Homeric struggle. It was on one of those days, I do not know which, that he replied to the appeal to mutiny from M. de la Fayette, by this scathing rebuke : ‘ When civil war breaks out, whatever blood is shed is

on the head of those who have provoked it. The previous speaker knows this better than anyone else : he has learnt, more than once, with the feelings of despair in his heart and a blush on his brow, that he who arouses the fury of the mob is obliged to follow that very mob, and almost to lead it.'

This terrible recollection of the consequences of October 6, this picture of Louis XVI., dragged from Versailles to the Hôtel de Ville, with the National Guard in front, surrounded by men and women in rags, who carried the heads of those of the body-guard who were massacred on the very threshold of the Queen's apartments, and who exhibited those ghastly trophies at the very gates of the palace, sent a thrill of horror through the whole Chamber. No doubt in this M. de Serre exceeded the moderation of Parliamentary language, and even strict justice; but the 'wild boar' was brought to bay, and it must also be borne in mind that the words which he was refuting were most revolutionary.

The solution of this crisis is well known.

M. de Serre had only accepted the Ministerial Bill of the Duc de Richelieu with the strict understanding that he should have a right to introduce in it whatever modification he thought fit, and merely as a makeshift.

At the close of his reply to Camille Jordan, he had, notwithstanding the opposition of his colleagues, opened the door to a sort of compromise. He had indicated the Bill proposed by M. Decazes as a basis on which it might be possible to come to terms. This offer, which was despised during the first heat of the strife, was renewed towards the end, that is to say, at a moment when no one knew what was to be the issue. An amendment, proposed by M. Courvoisier, and modified by M. Boin, substituted the Bill of M. Decazes for that of M. de Richelieu, and was passed by a large majority. The two kinds of constituencies and the increase of the number of deputies were carried.

This new Bill, which was introduced at once into the House of Peers, found no opposition there. I, however, took that opportunity to claim for it what it yet wanted: the integral renewal of members, the lowering of the age at which members were eligible, the division of small constituencies into *circonscriptions* based upon the community of interests and that of customs, a fixed qualification as to the assessment of voters instead of the system of the highest taxation in the large constituencies — in short, I set forth the motives of the proposed Bill in their entirety, just as I had submitted them to M. de Serre at the beginning of

the Session, and I demanded my share of the responsibility in the transactions which followed.

In spite of the state of my health, and the warnings of my medical advisers, my speech lasted for more than two hours, and it was very successful. When I re-read it, after a lapse of forty years (I had taken care to write it out myself after the sitting), I think that it was not unworthy of the occasion; that it touched boldly, but not violently nor rashly, on the essential points of our representative system, and on the most delicate points of the politics of the day.

I was unable to be present at the first sitting of the trial of Louvel.

Acting upon the advice of my doctors, I had gone to Coppet, and during the first few weeks of my stay there no event of importance happened; nevertheless, those weeks marked an epoch in my life.

We were in the midst of a *revival*.

That is the name which, amongst Protestants, is given to those times of extraordinary fervour, of that renewal of religious zeal, during which Divine grace is shed abroad abundantly—warms the benumbed souls of men, strengthens faith, and multiplies conversions.

The Swiss Church, and especially that of Geneva, stood in great need of all this. During the whole of the

last century, and at the beginning of the present one, that church had been, to say the least, thoroughly Arian. D'Alembert had congratulated it on this in a famous article in the *Encyclopédie*, and the protests which he thus aroused were not at all calculated to make him retract his assertions.

The reaction had already been going on for several years. Madame de Staël had witnessed its birth in 1816, and her latitudinarian piety accepted it but with reluctance. At that time, I had often witnessed discussions on that subject, between her and her daughter. The latter, who was very fervent and really orthodox, from that time took a growing interest in that reform. The society of Geneva and of Lausanne was divided; our best friends mutually attacked each other with increasing violence, and this was also the case with the most noted Ministers of the Calvinist communion. My brother-in-law still hesitated. As a matter of fact, the foundations of Protestantism, and even of Christianity, were at stake; it was a question of knowing whether Protestantism was to be a pillow of laziness for lukewarm souls, and of dreams for tender minds—a rationalism which was ashamed of itself, a sort of compromise, from some kind or other of double-faced respect for human nature, between

the sincerity of true philosophers and that of true Christians.

That struck me more than anything else: I was no Protestant, I was not even a Christian in the strict acceptance of the term.

Like the generality of the men of my day—I mean of those whose sentiments were honourable, and whose conduct was regular, and who were not libertines, according to the ideas of either the seventeenth or the eighteenth century—and from the time of my first Communion, I had adhered to the *profession de foi du vicaire Savoyard* (profession of faith of a Savoy curate). I never had any doubt about the great truths of natural theology, which are laid down so grandly in the first part of this work. I admired, like the good curate, the life and character of Jesus Christ; like him, I found the Gospel humanly inexplicable; but, to my great regret, I found his objections to miracles and mysteries unanswerable—that is to say, his objections to revelation properly so called; and that being so, I did not any longer try to deceive myself. I perfectly understood that in the state of mind in which I was, although I was not irreligious, I certainly had no special religion. There can be no religion without the practice of its rites, and the practice of such rites is only the commemoration of a miracle, or

the symbol of a mystery. Natural religion, without supernatural religion is, taking it all in all, nothing but a system of philosophy which is better and more reasonable than its opposite.

From that time, I looked upon that form of Protestantism which consisted in regarding the Gospel as true, keeping to the moral and sentimental side and disregarding all the rest without admitting or rejecting anything, as inconsistent and rather puerile ; it had, according to my ideas, neither manliness, nor dignity, nor real and solid security. I said so to my brother-in-law, when he consulted me about his perplexities. ‘ There is,’ I said to him, ‘ no middle course ; you must either be a philosophical Christian like I am, and one who is sorry to be able to go no farther, or you must, like your sister, be a Christian out and out. The state of mind which you inherit from your mother, who, again, inherited it from her father, was a mere protestation against the incredulity of their time, and also a first step towards real belief ; but a first step is worth nothing, unless it be followed by a second ; the Gospel is either inspired or it is not ; if it is, all is true, and, on the other hand, nothing is true if it be not inspired. Jesus Christ was merely a philosopher like Socrates or Confucius, although he was superior to both of them.’



We then talked at random ; we resumed our arguments, one after the other, and the result of these repeated conversations, for him and for me, was the conviction that those opinions were less conclusive in reality than in appearance.

I do not think I am mistaken if I date my brother-in-law's conversion from that time, a conversion which was rapid, fervent and durable ; I am sure that I am not mistaken if I date, not my own conversion, which was slow, laborious and progressive, but the beginning of those persevering studies which I pursued amidst the distractions of public life, and the fruits of which I collected up in a great work to which I gave the finishing touch as late as 1852.

As regards the state of Europe at the close of 1820, the foolish revolutions which broke out in the two peninsulas seemed to justify the measures taken by the Holy Alliance. The Emperors of Austria and of Russia allied themselves with the King of Prussia ; their little Congress, held at Troppau, on the frontier between Silesia and Poland, had hurled a first anathema against the revolution of Naples, and had called upon the King, who felt disconcerted and ill-disposed towards this improvised revolution, to give an account of his intentions, if he had any ; a request which did not displease him by any

means, but which was a bitter pill that the Neapolitan Parliament was obliged to swallow. The appointed rendezvous was at Laibach for another prospective Congress; as for that of Troppau, it had been the master-stroke of M. de Metternich. There he laid his hands on the Emperor Alexander—a hold which he did not relax afterwards — and he compelled our ambassador to divulge the secret instructions of his Court, which he turned to his own profit.

Under these auspices the Session of 1821 opened on the 20th of December.

The Emperor Napoleon had fallen ill, or, rather, had fallen ill again; for his health, which was much shaken, had been for a long time subject to successive changes. He fell ill again on May 1, 1821; his malady was a cancer of the stomach. From the third day his life was despaired of; on the fifth day, hope revived a little, but the next day, the 5th of May, at six o'clock in the evening, he died, without any convulsions, after a short agony, at the age of fifty-one years, eight months, and twenty days.

His death hardly at all interfered with the hopes which were attached to his name. In country places, in the ranks of the former army, whose members were still on active service or paid off, it was not believed;

officers on half-pay and malcontents turned their eyes towards his son, who was then eleven years of age, and was being educated by his grandfather, the Emperor of Austria, and about whom a thousand stories, each one more silly than the other, were related. The real leaders of the permanent conspiracy against the common enemy, that is to say, against the elder branch of the Bourbons—republicans like MM. de la Fayette and Manuel, and socialists like M. d'Argenson—felt relieved rather than weakened; the name of Bonaparte, the interests of which, in spite of them, were said to serve their projects—that name which they dared neither to make use of nor to reject—weighed upon and embarrassed them. Nobody either gained or lost by that event. I felt it less than any of my friends; and, as I see now, less than I ought to have done. If it is a fact, as I am at present inclined to believe, that Napoleon was the greatest character that history has ever produced, I cannot understand how it was that his disappearance had no greater effect on my mind. My old aversion for him was, I suppose, too strong.

I shall not stop here to relate the first events of the Greek insurrection.

It is well known that it sprang from a generous brotherhood which was formed in Germany, and whose

object was to spread education abroad, to revive the taste for letters in Turkey in Europe, to send professors, and to found schools, *lycées* and gymnasiums, there.

The natural result is also well known ; by degrees the people got hot-headed ; the desire for independence was aroused ; a silent agitation was working amongst the greater part of the nation, and only waited for a signal to break out.

It is again well known, that this signal had been given, if not through the direct, yet, at least, through the latent influence which Russia always exercised over those countries : that Alexander Ipsilanti, who gave that signal, was descended from one of the most considerable families of the Fanar, had been educated at the military college of Saint Petersburg, and was a Major-General in the Imperial Guard.

Lastly, it is well known that the appeal which he addressed to the Emperor Alexander—which came down like a thunderbolt on that Prince, in the very midst of the Congress of Laibach, and put him in a very embarrassing position—had no other answer but the warning that he would be left altogether to himself, which, warning was, moreover, seasoned with the usual maledictions ; it is also known that the unfortunate Ipsilanti, after a struggle of several months, overwhelmed by the

Turks, forsaken by his own people, and struck off the Russian army-list, was reduced to seek refuge on Austrian territory—a refuge which was generously given him in the fortress of Mankatsh, where he soon died of misery and ill-treatment.

Matters were in this state, when at the end of the Session, we left Paris for the Pyrenees, sorrowfully convinced that the case of the Greeks would be the same as that of the Neapolitans and Piedmontese, and that in the East, as in the West, the counter-revolution would only too easily gain the upper hand over revolutions which were too imprudently carried out.

During our stay there, matters improved, and that restored a certain amount of courage to the friends of liberty.

We soon heard, in fact we heard successively—events following closely one on the other—of the rising of Magne, the revolt of Livadia, and of the whole of Peloponessus, and of the formation of a senate or provisional Government, at Calamatta ; we heard of the insurrection in Etolia, in Epirus, in Thessaly ; lastly, and above all, of that in all the islands, that in Samos, Hydra, Ipsara. The news was at once terrible and glorious. The heroic resistance which the populations of these different places offered to the immense display of

force directed against it from all parts of the Ottoman Empire, to massacre, to pillage, to incendiary fires, put the quick defeat of the Neapolitans, and the still quicker routing of the Piedmontese, to utter shame. Barbarism put civilization to disgrace.

The 8th of June bore witness to the first triumphs of the small Greek naval squadrons against the huge ones of Turkey, between Mitylene and Tenedos; and the unexpected news of it spread like lightning even to the foot of the Pyrenees.

Then came the capture of Tripolitza, and that of Arta; the exploits of Mauromichali and of Colocotroni, and that series of vicissitudes to which one cannot revert, even after forty years, without feelings of admiration mixed with horror.

These were great subjects of conversation for idle people like us who were taking the baths. We were tolerably numerous that year, and most of us knew each other: M. de Saint-Aignan and his two charming daughters, who, afterwards, became accomplished wives; Madame de Saint-Aulaire and her daughters, of whom the same thing may be said without fear of being contradicted by anyone; M. Mauguin, M. Villemain, General César de la Ville, whom I had known when he was aide-de-camp to Marshal Bessières; others

whose names I have forgotten, and which I may remember by-and-by. The time did not appear long to us; we did not reckon our days by the number of our baths, and that is the greatest compliment which one can pay to life at a watering-place.

We returned to Paris at the beginning of September, and spent the autumn there; the elections were too near, and the Session would follow on them too closely, to allow us to go to Switzerland.

In order to give, during this interval, some slight idea of the state of public opinion, I shall jot down a few fragments of the diary which helps my memory :

‘*Sept. 27.* There is nobody in Paris, and everything is in the most complete state of stagnation. Nothing is being discussed. I have seen Madame d’Hénin, who told me that everyone was quiet and tolerably satisfied. M. de Lally has been to Lyons, where he found matters in a wonderful state of prosperity; five years ago there were five thousand factories there, and now there are thirty-five thousand. The heads of the different businesses said to him : “We are very well satisfied with our authorities; as long as it goes on so, everything will progress satisfactorily.” It is thought that M. de Villèle will re-enter the Ministry, but people do not mind who gets into power; material prosperity

and moral sluggishness: such is the state of the country.

‘Madame d’Hénin told me that the King had a decided passion for Madame du Cayla; he receives her for three hours at a time, *tête-à-tête*; when he passes along the quay, she is at the window of her house, and he puts his head out of his carriage window, in order to cast sheep’s eyes at her.

‘I think that nobody takes any interest in the Greeks any longer.

‘I have met M. d’Argenson. Dunoyer had complained to him, the day before, about the state of the country, and, what is more strange, about its great prosperity. They are shedding tears about the ills which they have not, and about persecutions from which they do not suffer.

‘The day before yesterday I went to Court; and there I found myself all alone amidst those antiquated figures, which rather frightened me. The King was wheeled in in his chair; he is a peculiar man to look at. He has much dignity in spite of his stoutness; in spite of his round shape and his red complexion, he has a royal mien. His mouth and his eyes do not agree together in the least; he is always smiling, but his looks are severe, even to hardness. He is a man



whose mind is moulded according to the ideas of the *ancien régime*, a man whose conversation may have its characteristics, but that is all. The Duchess d'Angoulême possesses nobleness without any natural grace ; her bearing is awkward ; her tone of voice is rough ; she is badly dressed, but she has a dignified bearing. Her eyes are red, but this may be from weeping ; this adds to the grave expression which her face produces. The Duc d'Angoulême is awkward and ungainly ; he is always on the move, beating his sides when he laughs, his intentions are, however, better than those of the rest. As for the Duchess de Berri, she does not seem to be at all unhappy, but it is quite inconceivable to what extent unhappiness has developed her ; she is much more graceful and less timid ; although she squints, she is not disagreeable to look at ; she has a fine complexion and beautiful shoulders ; and although she is a *blonde*, she has a charming southern cast of countenance.'

'Oct. 4.—I have seen M. de Lally—a delightful man. He is very vehement about the Greeks ; just as I like one to be. He said to me : "I should like to be the Peter the Hermit in this crusade." He told me that he had spoken to the Duke of Wellington with all the indignation which he felt in his heart.'

'Oct. 30.—The Ministers are very frightened at the result of the elections ; the Right has carried them everywhere. Prosper, who has just returned from Auvergne, says that the contest is very hot there ; the Government without any power, and the functionaries utterly despised. The Royalists are governed by two feelings—victory and fear. They think that they will triumph, but they feel their weakness, and this increases their violence.

' M. Royer-Collard was wonderfully well received in his department ; the popular demonstration in his favour was lively and reasonable. And so he is full of hope and zeal. He says that France is a great nation, just as Madame de Sévigné said Louis XIV. was a great king.

' M. Guizot's book has been a great success. He explains the position of the Ministry wonderfully clearly, and also that state of tranquillity without any stability which characterizes the actual position.

' M. Constant is very low-spirited. Anger is not a feeling which will sustain a man during a long period of adversity. He is disgusted with politics, and has betaken himself again to his work on the different religions of the world. He takes refuge in scepticism, as others do in faith.

‘The other day I was at the Duke of Orleans’. There I met Pozzo di Borgo. For the first time we got on very well together; we were talking about the Greeks. Pozzo has a southern face and accent, and a very charming turn of mind. He possesses that lively imagination which, when applied to facts, constitutes the charm of men who come from the South of France. That imagination is never applied to generous ideas or sentiments; but it looks, so to say, at the main facts of current events, and depicts them with vivid and suitable colours.

‘I also conversed with the Duke of Orleans: we spoke about public matters. He believes that the resistance offered by public opinion will be rather passive, although very earnest. He said to me rather wittily, “This Government is like a hat on a head, which the head will not fit.”

‘The elections have definitely resulted thus :

‘Out of eighty-six members elected, sixty members of the Right have been elected. The rest are pretty equally divided in number between the Left-Centre and the Left.

‘The Session opened on November the 5th, the day which had been fixed by the Ordinance for calling together the Electoral Colleges.

As the infirmities of the King prevented his getting into a carriage, the two Chambers met, for the first time, in the Louvre, in the *Salle des gardes* of Henry IV.

The King was wheeled in through the great gallery, in his armchair.

His speech was colourless, vague and without any effect.

On the other hand, from its very first lines, the Address sounded like a declaration of war ; the Right and the Left mounted to the assault through the same breach. The attitude which our Ministry had taken with regard to foreign affairs, both at the Congress of Troppau and at that of Laibach, and also during the course of general negotiations, became the common point of attack of both Parties ; the Right complained of the consideration which was shown towards the revolutions in Spain, Naples and Piedmont ; the Left complained of the support which was given to the counter-revolutions. Of 274 votes, 176 as against 98, adopted the following resolution, and laid it before the King.

‘ We congratulate you, Sire, on your continued amicable relations with foreign powers, having the just hope that a peace which is so precious has not been

bought by any sacrifice incompatible with the honour of the nation, and the dignity of your crown.'

The King refused to listen to this address which was really insolent.

It was not till after two days of hesitation that he would admit the President and two of the secretaries of the Chamber to his presence; he then said to them, speaking from the throne :

'I know the address which you are going to present to me.

'In exile and under persecution, I sustained the honour of my race, and of the French name. On my throne and surrounded by my people, I am indignant at the mere thought that I could ever sacrifice the honour of the nation or the dignity of my crown.

'I wish to believe that the majority of those who voted the Address, did not weigh all its expressions. If they had had the time to appreciate them, they would never have allowed a supposition, which, as a king, I cannot characterise, and which, as a father, I wish to forget.'

That language, as M. de Vaulabelle himself allows, was lofty and dignified; so much so, indeed, that for a moment the Ministry thought itself strengthened by it.

On September 3, M. de Serre introduced two bills : one on the Press Laws, which, bit by bit, demolished all the work of 1819, the other on Newspaper Censorship, which was extended for five years.

The reception which awaited these two bills, and the successive checks which the Ministry received in the first stages of the debate, having determined M. de Richelieu, to relieve his conscience, to request the King to dissolve the Chamber of Deputies, a request which could not be granted in the present state of public opinion and public affairs ; on December 13, a new Ministry was gazetted in the *Moniteur*,\* which was countersigned by M. de Lauriston, Minister of the royal household.

\* Then the official organ of the French Government.

## BOOK V.

## FIFTH PERIOD.

1822—1827.

I PROFITED by the interval between the Sessions of 1822 and 1823 to go to England; I went with my brother-in-law, who had the intention of making some stay there; I, however, had very little time to spare. I was very well received by all the English people that I knew, and, as has been seen, I knew many and belonging to the highest classes. It was just at the time of the London *season*, and I was immediately overwhelmed with invitations of all kinds; this was more than I desired, but I was obliged to accept them, under the penalty of not being considered a *gentleman*.

M. de Chateaubriand was, at that time, our Ambassador in England.

I found him there, just as I had always found him in France, arrogant and envious at the bottom of his heart, but complimentary and almost fawning out-

wardly. He was ostentatious, but it was the ostentation rather of a *parvenu* than of a nobleman ; he made a display of his plate, of his liveries, of his carriages, making a great fuss about his own importance, which was not so very great in this immense emporium of men of all ranks, and of the produce of all countries. He was extremely anxious to present me to George IV., which I absolutely refused, wrongly perhaps ; he insisted on the matter with that affectation of philosophical disdain which was so familiar to him : ‘ One ought to see all kinds of people,’ he said to me ; just as when, going to see the Duc de Bordeaux at Venice, he is reported to have said : ‘ *Il faut bien aller voir son Roi.*’ He spoke to me of the Prince whom he was then serving and of his Ministers in more than contemptuous terms, and added carelessly : ‘ As for me, I am entirely devoted to Villèle ; he may do as he likes with me ;’ and he did not the least disguise the wish he had to be summoned to the Congress of Verona, which was then about to meet. He invited me to dinner to meet Mr. Wilberforce, but old and infirm as he was, that gentleman never dined out.

However, to make up for this disappointment, I received, that same evening, an invitation to lunch with that excellent man. I found him in his little house, bent nearly double, half-humpbacked, very



broken, but very friendly, and surrounded by the defenders of the cause to which he had consecrated his life; several of these I knew already, amongst others General Macaulay, who several times stayed in Switzerland and Paris on his return from India; I made the acquaintance of the brother of the general, Zachary Macaulay, who at that time was the most ardent adversary of the slave-trade, and later of slavery. In the midst of that grave and earnest company, young Thomas Macaulay, who has since become the most eminent literary man in England, was beginning to make his mark. The meal passed off very pleasantly; Mr. Wilberforce spoke hardly any French, but he understood it very well; with me, it was just the other way. After lunch he took me, and all the company, to a great meeting of Abolitionists at Freemasons' Hall; he made me sit next to him, and introduced me to the meeting, which was half composed of Quakers with their broad-brimmed hats, and Quakeresses with their little caps. He spoke earnestly, and with much animation, spirit, conviction and humour, as in the best days of his youth, and we separated very good friends.

The next day I was at another breakfast-party, which was just as interesting for me.

On returning home I found a note from Miss Edgeworth, whom I had known in Switzerland, and who had spent several days at Coppet with her two amiable sisters. She did not invite me ; she indeed ordered me to go to M. Ricardo's house the next day at two o'clock, where I was expected. I was not personally acquainted with M. Ricardo, but I was, and this she knew, a great admirer of his writings ; I took care not to fail to go, and I met several distinguished persons there, amongst others, Mr. Malthus, with whom I was not acquainted either. A conversation began between the two, who were as great friends at heart as they were opposed in doctrine, and occasionally I put in a word, to show that I was not unworthy of taking part in the discussion. Those who know me, ever so little, will be sure that I agreed with M. Ricardo on all points. The same evening I received an invitation to the weekly dinner of the Economists, and I took care not to miss it. There I made the acquaintance of the most distinguished scholars and scientists : Mr. Mill, Mr. Tooke, Colonel Torrens, M. Malet, the son of M. Malet-Dupan, and several others.

I shall have occasion to mention my connection with M. Ricardo again.

I actively employed my mornings in visiting amongst

the immense number of objects of interest with which London is full, those which chiefly interested me. Amongst the first of these were the Courts of Justice. I frequented the four great Courts at Westminster, without neglecting the Privy Council and the Ecclesiastical Courts. Brougham was my guide; I had another, who was even more diligent, because he was not so much engaged; I had known in Switzerland Sir James Scarlett, who at that time was the leading barrister in England; he received me with open arms as soon as I arrived, and he extended his kindness so far as to put me into the hands of his eldest son (now Lord Abinger) who acted as my guide and interpreter. In his company, I was present at several criminal and civil cases; I had very great pleasure in seeing on the spot how judicial proceedings and incidents, about which I had read in books, were really developed.

Amongst the number of these incidents, I will mention one, which diverted me very much.

Brougham had told me, that the next day he should appear in a case in the King's Bench, on the opposite side to Sir James Scarlett, and I went there as soon as I was free. The case had begun; it was going on very slowly; it was a case of libel against the Queen, and Brougham, as attorney-general for that princess,

who had recently been declared legally innocent (I am not saying anything about her actual innocence), demanded the punishment of the libeller. Sir James Scarlett defended the latter as well as he possibly could ; but, nevertheless, as I said, the speeches were neither very spirited nor very serious. As soon as Brougham saw me come in, he made a sign to his opponent, and both began to attack each other vigorously ; allusions, sarcasms, incriminations, recriminations, poured out from both sides, and loud laughter from the audience accompanied this assault-at-arms. The presiding judge, whose name, I am ashamed to say, I have forgotten, at first seemed rather surprised at so much noise, but noticing me in a corner, he guessed, from my foreign looks, that the attack was being delivered for my benefit ; he kindly lent himself to the joke, sent for me, gave me a seat beside him on the bench, and for a sufficient length of time left a free field to the combatants. I do not know what the result was, and nobody, I fancy, including the two opposing counsel, cared much more about the matter than I did.

I received every day more invitations to dinner, and more invitations to the evening parties (*roués*) of the season, than I could accept. At that period, as now, dinner began and ended late. The only two about



which I remember anything were, one at the Duke of Sussex's, and the other at the Lord Mayor's, or rather the ex-Lord Mayor's of London, Mr. Wood's.

The Duke of Sussex, the youngest brother of the King, had been a member of the Opposition all his life; he was a sincere Liberal, and a sincere friend of the most distinguished chiefs of the party; he had no after thoughts, no personal intrigues, no pecuniary wants. In his very small house at Kensington, he received political men, men of letters, men of the world, and the most distinguished foreigners, at his very little table. Seated next to him, I underwent a regular interrogatory as to the state of parties, minds, and literature in France. I made the acquaintance of my neighbour on my right, who was no less a person than the celebrated Lord Erskine. Apart from flattery, the Prince appeared to me to possess much more sense, sound sense, cultivated good sense, and above all more modesty than the oracle of the bar. Lord Erskine appeared to me, as he did to everybody else, to be a mere tattler, and very vain; he told me several anecdotes about his judicial career which I knew already, and one, amongst others, which I had read in Miss Edgeworth's works, and which, no doubt, she had heard from him.

Mr. Wood, who had been Lord Mayor during the trial of Queen Caroline, that is to say, in 1821, resembled Lord Erskine in vanity and twaddling ; as to the rare talents of the great advocate, it will be fully understood that Mr. Wood did not possess even the shadow of them ; but he had vehemently taken the Queen's side, and he was one of those, whose urgency had prevailed upon the Queen to return to England, and he had received her triumphantly, in the name of the City. That had given him a sort of celebrity. I had known him in Switzerland, and in Paris, where he had been several times ; we had *fêted* him as well as we could, as the lion of the period, and I remember that at the end of a great dinner at which I was present, when I asked him how he liked Paris, he said : ' It is a delightful town, but one can get nothing whatever to eat there.' Apparently to show me that London did not deserve that singular reproach, he asked me to a dinner, which was a tremendous affair, both in quantity and in the time it took. The Duke of Sussex was the principal guest ; a large number of distinguished persons were crowded together, and rather made fun of their host. The whole proceedings were very tedious, though curious enough.

During the interval between the end of these inter-

minable dinners and the hour for going to the *rouls*, I generally went into the House of Parliament, and managed to attend some of the sittings ; nevertheless, I arranged my time so as to devote two evenings to Lord Grey and the same to Holland House.

I had been introduced to Lord Grey by Lord Lansdowne, and by Robert Wilson, with whom I was tolerably intimate when he was prosecuted for having assisted M. de la Vallette in his escape. Lord Grey received me with unvarying kindness ; Lady Grey, who spent the whole day at home, where the delicate state of her health confined her, allowed me, as an exception, to go there in the evening. Lord Grey questioned me with interest about the state and the future of France, and gave me some excellent advice, which I am sorry I did not make better use of ; he was a great statesman, and, moreover, a good man. His noble, grave, and sincere demeanour, his bearing, and the loftiness of his language, will never be forgotten by me. Bolingbroke wrote the story of the patriot king ; the life of Lord Grey would be the history of a great patriotic nobleman.

I had known Lord and Lady Holland in Paris.

Lord Holland was, as is well known, the best and most amiable of men. He had all Mr. Fox's kindness

of heart, if he did not possess his eloquence. His mind was extremely well cultivated, and as well versed in the classical tongues and Spanish literature as Mr. Fox was in the classical tongues and Italian literature. Both possessed to the same degree, that is to say, to a very high degree, a knowledge of French literature.

Nothing was more delightful than that charming residence of Holland House, which he occupied all the year round ; nothing was more delightful than that excellent library, where the recollection of Addison, who had been its former possessor, seemed, in a measure, to hover over its present one.

The supineness of Lord Holland, for which there was some excuse on account of his bodily infirmities, and which was not mental idleness, lent a piquancy to his conversation which was always instructive and sprightly ; Doctor Allen, who lived with Lord Holland, and who was one of the most learned and witty men in England, every moment took his share in this conversation, which was always animated, and provided it with constant resources ; he was called in joke Lady Holland's *anti-chaplain* ; he openly professed atheism, and that was the reason of the nickname, which was a poor piece of wit, springing from a painful subject.

Lady Holland was far from possessing Lord Hol-



land's qualities; she was haughty, exacting, and waspish; I say this with regret, for personally I always found her very obliging; but when I say this, I shall not be telling anybody what was not known before—she was a lady of high rank who had been divorced, and thus she had lost, if not her rank, at any rate her position in society, and was excluded from Court; she paid back social and official prudery by returning disdain for disdain, she received all the all-important persons of her own country, and all strangers of distinction, on terms of intimacy: she was a faithful friend, a woman who adhered to her party, an ardent politician, well versed in all the intrigues of the day, and thus she possessed a great ascendancy on all who were brought in contact with her, and supreme ascendancy over her husband; she controlled him in all circumstances of life, and he could not do without her even in the smallest. During a journey which they took together in Switzerland, having left him at Vevey for three days for some reason or other, on her return she found him in bed, just as he was when she left him, as he had not been able to make up his mind to get up and dress himself.

Whilst writing these lines, I remember a breakfast at which I was present with them, both at

Mr. Buxton's, brother-in-law of Mr. Fry. Lady Holland took me there. The object was not only to acquaint me with Mr. Buxton, who was one of the most highly respected men in England, and one of those who were most devoted to the cause which was so dear to me, the abolition of the Slave-trade and slavery, but it was also to enable me to inspect in all its details the great brewery which Mr. Buxton owned, and which was an immense and wonderful establishment, then without its equal in London, and in which the vast and varied compartments were put in motion, story by story, and step by step, by a unique steam-engine which was fixed in the middle of the building, and which was like the soul of this gigantic body, whose products were circulated through the streets of London, from district to district, dragged by horses almost as huge as the steam-engine itself. The breakfast was lively and interesting; several distinguished people, whose names I have forgotten, were present at it, and the dishes were cooked under our own eyes, in a stove fixed to the steam-engine. I met Madame Marcet there again, whom I had known in Switzerland, and whose friendship I cultivated for many years; but Mrs. Fry was wanting. She was away from London, and in her absence Mr. Buxton promised to obtain for me an

order to visit the London prisons; and I saw at Newgate the small flock of scabby sheep who were the objects of his sister-in-law's care.

I shall not speak about the *routs*.

They were in London at that period, what they are always, and everywhere. I went there late, and stayed as short a time as possible; I hate a crush in any shape or form. I have, however, a very pleasant recollection of an evening at Almack's, where I had remained late, to do honour to the invitation of the Princess de Lieven and Lady Jersey, a patroness of the establishment, and who was then the queen of fashion; there, I was suddenly accosted by Mr. Canning, whom I had not seen since his stay in France after the first Restoration. He was the first to recall to my mind Madame de Staël's drawing-room, and his vehement disputes with her. Freed from all ties that bound him to the Ministry, which he had left on the occasion of the trial of the Queen, in disgrace with the King and at Court, his conversation seemed to me to be freer and more liberal than formerly. We talked on all sorts of subjects during a great part of the night; he displayed real affectation in showing himself as brilliant in mind and as full of humour and high spirits as he could be when he chose. I was sorry to be obliged to leave London the next

day, and not to be able to make more use of the beginning of a connection which was not kept up.

I was still more sorry to have to leave my old friend Bob Smith, a few moments after meeting him, whom I had not seen since I had last met him at Pisa. He arrived in London almost at the moment when I was leaving, and only just had time to present me to his brother, the Reverend Sydney Smith, now much better known than his brother Bob was. Spite lives longer in men's minds than kindness.

I was recalled to France by the opening of the new Session, which, as I mentioned above, followed very closely on the first.

The electoral colleges had been convoked for the 9th and 16th of May.

Without being numerically favourable to the Liberal Party, the elections had surpassed its expectations. In Paris that party had triumphed in six out of the eight arrondissements; it had obtained thirty-two out of eighty-six deputies. That was a great deal after the reform of the last year.

The Session opened on June 4, and lasted till August 18.

It was exclusively devoted to discussing a bill on Customs, one on Canals, and the Budget for 1823.

I took no part in the debates, which were dull and languid in the Chamber of Peers, and which only assumed any animation in the other Chamber on the question of the verification of the elections of the new members and the incidents which related to the conspiracies of the year.

## II.

1823.

FROM 1823 the victory of the ultra-Royalist over the Liberal party assumed the character of a durable and decisive ascendancy.

The election of Grégoire in 1819, the murder of the Duc de Berri in 1820, had brought about the fall of the Decazes ministry. The new election law had transferred the majority from the Left to the Right. The birth of the Duc de Bordeaux had affirmed the new system. Nevertheless the second ministry of M. de Richelieu had great difficulty in getting through the year 1821, tossed about as it was between an already numerous majority of the Right, and a still numerous minority of the Left, between the impromptu triumph and the miserable discomfiture of the revolutionary party in Italy; between the bravadoes of the *descamisados*, and the anathemas of Troppau and Laibach. Being attacked by both parties with equal fury, it had

finally succumbed and made way for a ministry which was soon to bear the name of M. de Villèle.

That new ministry being, in its turn, driven to bay and harassed by the Right and by the Left, within and without the Chambers, by debates and conspiracies, had only been enabled to establish itself by taking part in party passions, by sacrificing to its own security more perhaps than to that of the monarchy, a large number of victims, and as will be seen, and could only manage to maintain its position by allowing itself to be forced to take part in the Spanish expedition. These were sad expedients, but they succeeded almost *ultra petita*; I must allow this with sorrow, for it is not indeed to our glory.

These sanguinary sacrifices attained their object; there were no more conspiracies, as soon as it became evident that heads would be the stake in case of failure; and now conspirators were just as eager to withdraw from or to disavow their foolish enterprises as they had formerly been eager to engage in them.

On February 10, as a matter of fact, the very day after M. de Chateaubriand was still deluding the English ambassador with derisive explanations, M. de Villèle being called upon by the chief of the rank and file of his party, presented a demand to the Chamber of

Deputies for a credit of a hundred million francs, to defray the expenses of the war with Spain.

Those credits were to be the real battle-field ; and they were even more than that. Meanwhile the skirmish on the Address, passed from the Chamber of Peers to that of Deputies.

The contest was rather sharp. M. de Villèle was snubbed by the Right and by the Left : by the Right because he tried to avoid war, by the Left because he had allowed himself to be dragged into it, and it was in this perplexing position that an unfortunate phrase escaped him, which for years has been misused with regard to him. He appeared to have said that France was reduced to the alternative of attacking the revolution on the other side of the Pyrenees, so as not to be obliged to defend it on the Rhine. As a matter of fact, he said nothing of the sort ; but in politics, parties are precisely made up of people who make it their business to pretend to be deaf ; it was in vain that he tried to act and to struggle ; all the explanations in the world were no good. Nevertheless, however, he obtained a large majority.

The report on the vote for the hundred millions was the work of a man who was thus preluding to the great celebrity which he was one day to attain : M. de Mar-



tignac, who was the honour and the ornament of the bar of Bordeaux, which has been so productive of great orators. That report was clever, elegant, moderate, like its author, who, however, possessed other qualities besides these.

The debate opened the next day.

Agreeably to the plan which had been arranged, M. Royer-Collard was down to speak first, and nobody grudged him this post of honour. Nothing could be more lofty, more weighty, more bold than his speech. It had a great effect when he drew a parallel between the war which we were declaring against Spanish independence and that which we had undertaken from 1795 to 1806 in defence of our own. The effect was immense when he uttered these memorable words :

‘ That war was not only national, but it was perhaps the most national thing that had occurred since 1789. Why ? Because it was sustained by the liveliest and most general feeling which exists in France, I mean the horror of foreign rule. Was it for the benefit of the Committee of Public Safety or for that of the Directory that we conquered at Fleurus, at Zurich, and on many more battlefields ? No ; France would be indignant at such a supposition ; no, she was not defending bad and despicable governments, she was defending her own in-

dependence. She would do the same thing again to-day; it is the cause of our independence that triumphed throughout Europe by force of arms and of treaties; it is that cause which has consecrated our glory, caused it to be accepted, recognised, honoured by sovereigns and by peoples. Our glory is pure because our cause was pure. The recollections of that great war will never be effaced from amongst us because it was a domestic event for every family; because there is not a single family which has not shed some of its blood in it.

‘And now consider this war which is proposed to you. . . . If this war which you are going to wage against Spanish independence is just, the war which foreign nations waged on us thirty years ago was just also; they had therefore the right to burn our towns, to lay waste our country, to invade our provinces, and we had no right to defend ourselves. We must impress that upon our nation, which thinks much of itself, and does not forget the past. What can I add to this comparison?

‘We are living at a period when nations are more enlightened than the most enlightened were formerly; they now perceive the consequences of the most obscure matters as distinctly as the clearest matters. Do not be astonished that the Spanish war is so very unpopular; it is not only the sacrifices which it would

necessitate that sadden our generous nation—it would gladly bear them ; it would readily accept them in any cause which was after its heart ; but it feels instinctively that this war is being waged against herself on her own territory, and that, at every victory, she would again lose the battles which she had won.’

His speech concluded by a noble and touching allusion to his personal situation.

‘I also am a Frenchman, and as such I feel it incumbent on me to oppose a war which menaces France as much as it does Spain. Of all the duties which I have been able to fulfil towards the legitimate monarchy, none has appeared to me to be more sacred or more pressing. Can I be silent when blind counsels are urging France to draw her sword ? The welfare of France has been the thought, the wish, I may almost say the sole object of my life, it is now the first of my interests, if the most disinterested and constant love can be called interest. What other feeling could, indeed, induce me to ascend this tribune ? Seeing that the Restoration has been established, what else can I hope for, if not that it may be strengthened, and every day take deeper interest in the public welfare, if not that it may love France in order to be loved by her.’

The minority wished this speech to be printed. The majority refused it.

The Left centre having taken up its position in the person of M. Royer-Collard, on the 24th, the Left did the same thing on the 26th in the person of Manuel.

In the meanwhile the desultory and vacillating policy of M. de Villèle had been questioned by General Foy, but M. de Villèle got cleverly out of the difficulty. Then came the turn of M. de Chateaubriand, who answered nobody—for M. Bignon was nobody, at least at that time—holding in his hand a long speech, to which I shall have occasion to refer again very soon, and which contained a passage very carefully worked out and pregnant with storms.

It ran as follows :

‘ Ferdinand is but still a prisoner in his palace, as was Louis XVI. before going to the Temple, and thence to the scaffold. I do not wish to libel the Spaniards, but I do not wish to estimate them higher than my fellow-countrymen. Revolutionary France produced a Convention; there is no reason why revolutionary Spain should not produce one also? It is already too much that the world should have witnessed the trials of Charles I. and of Louis XVI. Let there be another judicial murder, and a sort of

right to commit crime will have been established by the authority of precedents, and a body of jurisprudence for the use of peoples against their kings,'

I have no doubt that these words caused Manuel to mount the tribune sooner than he had intended. Till then, in fact, everything had gone on quietly, if I can trust my memory and the journal which refreshes it. Here is what I find written there :

‘ General Foy is not a calm man, but his looks are as honourable as his whole existence. He spoke very well, and was more easy than usual ; he seemed more as if he were mounting a breach than the tribune. . . The close of his speech was striking. In his looks of an old soldier, there was something that seemed to show that he would be still good in action. In a moment he called upon the members of the Right, to state, on their conscience, whether there was a single man in the departments who wished for war. He got no answer, there was not even a murmur. The Right was gloomy ; the Ministerial bench affected hilarity ; M. de Chateaubriand tried to laugh ; M. de Clermont-Tonnerre thought it in good taste to smile each time our fleet was mentioned ; M. de Villèle had a pitiable air, he was making little paper ducks, and kept his eyes steadily down.

*'Feb. 25.—On Tuesday I was at the Chamber again. Peace was mentioned there. Rothschild said that Austria was strongly in favour of it. The first speech was that of M. Bignon. I remarked that sincerity and gravity have an influence over the whole assembly, because there was a difference between the manner in which M. Royer-Collard and M. Bignon were listened to.*

*'M. de Chateaubriand, who had laughed so much the day before, did not seem nearly so merry whilst M. Bignon was overwhelming him with sarcasms.*

*'He mounted the tribune after him ; he was visibly affected and pale. He has an agreeable face, and his eyes especially are magnificent ; he has a large head and a small body, and the tribune, by hiding part of him did him good service. His manner was tolerably correct, although one noticed the effort it cost him to be at his ease ; one saw that he was trying to assume a simple and impartial manner, to form a contrast to his reputation. He began rather broadly, but as he got into his subject his arguments became narrower ; he made some pretence of bringing forward bad reasoning on commercial matters ; one saw that he wished to excite astonishment by showing that a poet understood buying mules, and the arguments which he drew from it in favour of war made everybody laugh.'*

His theory on the matter of intervention, which he had learnt the night before, as was clearly seen, and the example which had been borrowed from England in 1793—a misleading example—had no great success either. When he came to the passage which I have repeated, and which was received with thunders of applause by the right, Manuel did not let slip the opportunity.

As his turn for speaking was rather far off, he got M. Etienne to yield up his to him. He replied, and his reply became the great event of the sitting.

When one reads it again attentively, forgetting the state of parties, the position of affairs, the passions of the moment, one finds some difficulty in understanding the effect which anything so natural, so simple and so easy to be foreseen, produced. Manuel, as a matter of fact, said nothing which anyone of us, a member of the Left-centre, a sincere loyalist and one with no mental reservation, might not have said in his stead. The basis of his speech had nothing factious about it, and his arguments were rather wanting in vigour and precision. As far as public justice, or political and diplomatic history was concerned, he knew little more than his opponent; like him, he confined himself to generalities, and to commonplaces borrowed from

newspapers and pamphlets, and when he touched on the delicate point, when he raised the point that had brought him into the tribune, he did so in the midst of interruptions, interpellations, and the most violent cries; he did so in terms which required neither retractation, nor even explanation.

‘The Government of Ferdinand VII.,’ he said, ‘was atrocious!’

M. Ravez, President of the Chamber, himself drew attention to the fact that the epithet, which alas! was too conformable to the truth, being addressed as it was to the Government, and not to the Prince personally, could not be found fault with.

‘You wish,’ he went on, ‘to preserve the King of Spain’s life; well then, do not renew the circumstances which conducted those to the scaffold, who at this moment inspire you with a lively, and I will add, in order fully to express my thoughts, with a legitimate interest.’

‘That is right,’ resounded from the Right.

Then, after having referred to the misfortunes of the House of Stuart, he added: ‘Is it necessary for me to say, that the moment when the dangers for the French Royal Family became the greatest, was when France—revolutionary France—felt that she had to defend



herself in a new fashion, and with quite new energy.'

Certainly it was necessary to possess all the acuteness, or to speak more correctly, all the blindness of mind of the most furious party prejudice, to discover in this unfinished phrase an apology for the murder of Louis XVI.; and still more, to persist in such an interpretation after Manuel handed to the President the whole passage, written out by himself, and which read thus :

'Then revolutionary France, feeling it incumbent on her to defend herself by new forces and with fresh energy, put all the masses in motion, excited all the popular passions, and thus brought about terrible excesses, and a deplorable catastrophe in the midst of a generous resistance.'

I, whom regicide always horrified, repeat that I should have no difficulty, under the circumstances, in employing the same words, just as they were, in their entirety, and attributing its direct and natural sense to each term; and whoever knows Manuel, knows that when he said: 'Such was my language and such were my thoughts,' that, as a matter of fact, they were such; he would have allowed himself to be cut into pieces rather than have conceded

anything to the fury of his opponents ; the sitting of the next day sufficiently proved this.

It will hardly be believed, but, nevertheless, this phrase, or rather, this unfinished phrase, truncated and mutilated as it was, was the disgraceful pretext of the attack which was made on the person of Manuel ; the attack, I say, for that is the proper word ; it would be useless to cite the example of England in order to deduce therefrom a certain disciplinary power of the House of Commons over its members ; that is turning excessive language to the excess of power ; the expulsion of Wilkes or of Lord Cochrane was legally in principle and in justice no less a crime than that of the whole Rump by Cromwell ; the expulsion of Manuel was no less a crime than was the eighteenth Fructidor. ‘ There is no right against right itself ! Revolutions, coups d’état, or violent measures have no excuse except legitimate defence.

I am not going to describe the scene which followed that day, it may be read anywhere ; it was disgusting in its rage and imposture, and recalls to my mind those cold fits of rage of the Emperor which I many a time have had occasion to mention ; but here is what I find about it in the newspaper which is lying before me :

‘ On Wednesday I did not go to the Chamber ; Victor

came back at four o'clock, and told me that the sitting had been very violent, and that Manuel's speech was interrupted. Hyde de Neuville rushed to the tribune like a mad man ; one might have thought that he wished to kill Manuel. As he always does on stormy occasions, the latter displayed the greatest calmness. With his arms folded, he looked at Hyde de Neuville so stedfastly that he caused him at once to return to his seat.

'I happened to have Talleyrand, M. de la Fayette, Benjamin Constant, General Foy and Sebastiani, who hate each other, to dinner that day. All Talleyrand's clique was upset, Sebastiani more than the rest, and in consequence Foy justified Manuel. He had a very decided air, and seemed ready to resort to illegal means whenever forced to do so. He explained Manuel's conduct, as I believe, very correctly. It was clear, from the attitude of the Chamber since that debate, that everybody was anxious to avoid war ; preparations for war between the Right and Left centres were being carried on, which might have produced peace, and perhaps a change of Ministry. Manuel, who will have nothing to do with these arrangements, wished to force the Right to acts of violence, and thus to make pacification impossible. Foy told us this, and then he

said quite carelessly : "The future will show whether it is useful or harmful." Sebastiani, on the contrary, affected to look grave, as did also M. de Talleyrand.

'I find M. de Talleyrand commonplace in dealing with serious matters; he forms a right estimate of matters, and has good common sense and firmness, which are backed up by his manners, his position, and his sententious tone; but his phrases always contain less than they appear to do; he is an example of the effect which can be produced on others by the weight which one ascribes one's self to what one says. Relate anything striking as a simple and natural matter, and common minds will regard it as such; give it a sententious touch, and they will believe that that conceals great depth. The real originality of M. de Talleyrand is in his jokes: they are a perfect mixture of impertinence and gentility, of composure and of gaiety, which is so clever that it really charms his hearers.

'He did not take much part in the conversation. He does not speak much in general conversation, and only expresses himself in jerks. The dinner was not very harmonious. Foy and Sebastiani cannot bear each other. Foy defended the Directory; M. Guizot attacked it. M. de Talleyrand having been in turns the servant and the enemy of the Directory, did not

say a word. M. Molé, who has a horror of everything which smacks of the Revolution, did not speak, except that he remarked to Madame de Saint-Aulaire that he was not satisfied with anyone. The dinner did not pass off too well. Madame de Dino was very cross; I have learnt, since, that she thought it might compromise M. de Talleyrand to dine with M. de la Fayette. She would like to make popular revolutions by means of crape dresses and silver turbans; to stir the masses by witty sayings, and to upset society without interfering with her soirées. She is a strange person, and always on the defensive; she has a temper, and does not hide it any more than any altogether unsophisticated person would do, who has not learnt to conceal her or his feelings. She is a strange compound. Her intellect is trenchant and formal, but she possesses a great deal of it.'

I have not curtailed anything in this digression; the pictures in it, and the dramatic incidents, may be found in history. It is the incidents and the impressions of the moment and the involuntary effect produced on such and such a person which put the finishing touch to the truth of these pictures by penetrating through the upper strata and ascertaining in a measure what is beneath them. I will now resume the account of my

recollections, interrupting it, however, when necessary.

The proposal for the exclusion, or, rather, for the immediate expulsion, of Manuel, without giving him an opportunity to defend himself, after having upset the Chamber during three hours ; after having, in vain, led to the exhaustion of all the means placed by the rules of the House at the disposal of the President for the preservation of order : calls to order, threats from the President to cover himself, the actual carrying out of those threats, the suspension of the sitting, and all the rest—resulted, thanks to the firmness of the President, in a written proposal which was regularly laid before the Chamber and entrusted to a Select Committee. The sitting was then adjourned to the next day, which was to be the great day.

As the *Moniteur* has faithfully related the events of that day, and as the generality of historians have copied the *Moniteur*, I shall content myself, here again, with reproducing the words of an eye and ear witness :

‘ I was present at the sitting of Thursday, the 28th.

‘ Manuel was not there. It was thought that he would not venture to come, and the Left looked very disconcerted.

‘ M. de la Bourdonnaie ascended the tribune to

demand Manuel's exclusion from the Chamber. At the very moment when he was pronouncing his name, every member being in his place, and all the Chamber being attentively listening, Manuel entered with a calm and dignified air. He crossed the empty floor of the House, and all those furious members who wished to tear him to pieces the day before, who would have greeted him with groans if he had entered a quarter of an hour before with the rest of the members, remained silent ; one might have heard a pin drop, so great is the power of courage and of coolness. If there was before any doubt as to the reception Manuel would have, such doubt disappeared altogether before the noble manner in which he came in, and room was respectfully made for him. It seems as if the way in which he delivered his speech the previous day was more cutting than the words themselves ; because no one felt hurt at reading it.\* He ascended the tribune in order to defend himself : there he was grand and full of dignity ; he did not retract a single word ; he affected even only to call the death of Louis XVI. a misfortune. The calmness of his manner, and the talent he then displayed, placed him far above all the Chamber ; all those furious members listened to him

\* In the official account of the debates.

without a murmur, although he spoke of them as *Montagnards*—as men of 1793. He was most powerful; on that day he was a real Gracchus, inveighing against what was not certainly by any means, the Roman senate. “As a victim of your rage,” he said, when preparing to quit the tribune, “if I were animated by a feeling of hatred, I should leave to your fury the care of avenging me.” Having said this, he resumed his seat amongst the excited members of the Right, himself still preserving the same coolness of manner.

‘Manuel is rather nice-looking; he is very fair, and, at ordinary times, has a quiet and insignificant manner; but his face is capable of many varied expressions, which it assumes whenever he grows animated; his face is, indeed, the mirror of his mental faculties, which remain slumbering in the calm, but burst forth impetuously in the storm; like the petrel, the storm is his element. There is also something common in his habits of life, which rises in trouble; like all demagogues, his dignity is mingled with vulgarity. His gestures are simple, and perhaps a little awkward; his voice is gentle, but his southern accent becomes very pronounced whenever he becomes animated.’

The committee to which M. de la Bourdonnaie’s



proposal had been referred having unanimously decided in favour of Manuel's exclusion, and the debate having been adjourned to March 3, Manuel, in the meanwhile, ascended the tribune several times in order to finish his interrupted speech, and several times also the majority refused to listen to him.

When the day for the debate came, the question naturally arose : What is the Left Centre going to do ?

Ought it to take the defence of Manuel, and thus, in its turn, expose itself to the reproach of indirectly acting as the apologist of regicide ?

Ought it to yield the arena of the debate to the madmen of the Right ; to sacrifice to their artificial passion, to their affected outbursts, liberty of speech, respect for truth and the rights of justice, and meekly to limit itself to protesting by a timid and silent vote ?

I must do two men, to whom the slightest suspicion of excusing the 21st of January would be the deepest of all insults—M. Royer-Collard and M. de Sainte-Aulaire—the justice of saying that neither of them hesitated for an instant ; that, first of all, *propria motu*, and then by mutual agreement, they determined to defend Manuel at all risks.

I say at all risks, because there were several in doing so. Manuel would not hear of being defended in any

language except his own; he would allow nothing which seemed to partake of indulgence or of protection; he explained himself beforehand to M. Royer-Collard with so much haughtiness that the latter considered himself insulted, and wished to send Sainte-Aulaire to demand satisfaction. Sainte-Aulaire had some difficulty in making the two parties listen to reason; M. Royer-Collard at last was brought to acknowledge, though with rather a bad grace, that a duel at his age, in his position, from such a motive, and under such circumstances, would be ridiculous in the eyes of the public, and would please their common enemy, and so the incident had no further result.

The sitting followed at which Manuel's exclusion was voted, which decision was carried into effect by main force. Here again, rather than copy from the *Moniteur*, I shall quote from the diary before me:

'On Monday, March 3, I went to the Chamber.

'The whole of the Left was in a state of uproar. General Foy, whose head has been turned by Manuel's popularity, had made up his mind to get into a rage, so that he might be called to order again; he therefore got into a state of fury which was not at all to the purpose, and was quite out of proportion to the occasion. M. de Sainte-Aulaire and M. Royer-Collard were

the only members who spoke at all calmly. M. Royer-Collard blamed Manuel severely, too severely, everything considered, according to most people's opinion ; but the meaning of all these speeches and of all these re-criminations was, that the time for legality had gone by, all that people had to do was to rise in revolt ; it really almost seemed like a prelude to civil war. The Right was ashamed of itself, and its speakers could bring forward no reasons which could satisfy even its own members ; it had to listen to every argument without being able to oppose anything to them, except sheer violence. Manuel spoke very well, saying that he would only yield to force. It was a wretched sight ; on the one hand there was foolish tyranny, and on the other wild disorder. M. de Girardin shouted louder than anyone else in the Chamber. Alexandre de Lameth jumped up from time to time, like a man who has had experiences of Parliamentary storms, and who understands all the appearances of them ; he apostrophized the President with angry gestures. General Foy had lost his head. During all that time I had in my gallery the wives of deputies of the Right, who pointed at the deputies of the Left, and uttered personal insults against them. They behaved like regular market women. One cannot be in worse company than

that of the extreme section of that party. They think that they can be allowed to do anything ; in their violence and in their credulity they are more vulgar than the common people themselves.

‘ On the Tuesday I was again present at the sitting.

‘ It was not known whether Manuel would be present or not ; it was thought that he might be stopped at the door. At last, half an hour after the opening of the sitting, he was seen to enter at the head of a body of the Left Centre, which had the appearance of a battalion of soldiers, and went to his place. I looked at him through my opera-glass, and I noticed that his face wore its usual expression, that his demeanour was as calm and quiet as usual. I am sure that his tone of voice was just as low, and that he spoke just as slowly, and in all this calmness there was no affectation ; it is a natural gift !

‘ During this time M. Ravez looked very upset ; he talked with the ushers and with the clerks ; he did not know whether he was on his head or his heels ; as M. de Barante said, “ He grew visibly thinner.” The most comical part was to see the Ministers come in. The War Minister had got as far as the middle of the House when some one came and spoke to him ; he said, “ Manuel,” and stopped ; he seemed to think : “ Into

what wasps' nest have I put my head?" They all came, M. de Chateaubriand, M. Peyronnet and the others, and then stopped in the middle of the House and went out again, after seeing Manuel. The sitting was suspended for a long time, and, during all the interval, there was a great amount of excitement; people asked each other what was going to happen, and the resolute bearing of one single man seemed to force a whole political party to recede. At last, the President called on Manuel to withdraw. "I announced yesterday," he said, rising very calmly, "that I should only yield to force; to-day I have come to keep my word." These words were spoken emphatically, and very quietly. The President adjourned the sitting for an hour, declaring that he should execute the orders of the Chamber. The Left and the Left Centre remained on their benches; their bearing was serious, and the whole sitting was solemn. During the interval several deputies came, and talked in our gallery with the people who were there; they roused each other mutually by poor jokes; cowardly fear was concealed under their violence. I was rather distressed, for I did not know whether a real battle might not take place in the Chamber; but I was so indignant that, on the other hand, that sustained me. Nevertheless I could perceive

that those who were most violent would also have been the most submissive if anything serious had happened. An usher arrived first, to give M. Manuel the order to withdraw; he was trembling, and read the order in a very low tone of voice; he had to be repeatedly asked to speak louder. The poor man was acting against the grain; he said afterwards: "One must really be hard up to undertake such dirty work!" Manuel refused to obey the order, and the usher timidly went to fetch some soldiers. The Left restrained itself; General Foy acted like a general; he enforced silence on the members of the Left whenever he noticed amongst them any signs of disturbance; for the first time they were quiet and well disciplined.

'The National Guard came in. Cries were raised on all sides of "No National Guard!" M. de la Fayette rose, and, with a paternal air, made a sign to them to retire. He found himself all at once in the same position in which he had been thirty years before. The officer in command hesitated, went for orders, returned, stammered, and finally turned towards the sergeant, who refused to obey his orders. Then from all sides cries of 'Vive la Garde Nationale' resounded. I could hardly keep from joining in them, and my eyes filled with tears; I have hardly ever felt a greater

emotion. I forgot altogether the existence of any other armed force, and fancied that the matter would end there. The action of the sergeant in refusing had been quite simple, with nothing emphatic or violent about it. He seemed to experience a sort of regret at finding himself placed under the necessity of acting so, and at being stopped by a feeling of respect and of duty at the moment when he was going to advance.

‘This is the first time that such a feeling of right, of respect for moral force, of the recognition of an authority which has no other power than that of the law—in a word, of that which constitutes liberty and public conscience—has been met with in a Frenchman. An instant later the gendarmes entered. The officer, M. de Foucault, seemed to be impressed by the sight; nevertheless he said to his men :

“ ‘Seize this man.’ ”

‘The gendarmes themselves did not know what to do. However, they went up two or three steps. Manuel allowed himself to be led out; all the Left followed him, overwhelming the gendarmes with abuse, and almost with blows. In the galleries the gendarmes were applauded, in imitation of the applause with which the National Guard had been received. There were some young men and some women who cried out

that it was not enough to take him out of the Chamber, but that he deserved to be knocked down. It was not at all certain whether there would not be a riot in the streets, but at the end of a few minutes we were told that all was quiet. The Right returned after having valiantly hidden itself during the crisis; its members resumed their seats, and the sitting recommenced; but the Left did not return, and these empty benches created a great sensation. This profound silence, succeeding to all that tumult, all those words which had been spoken on the opposite side of the Chamber to them, which had so excited them and now met with no response—all this had something solemn in it, something of the feeling which one has on looking at the empty place of anyone who has died, when one thinks of what he might have said in words, or expressed by deeds. The Right seemed in a state of consternation. One might almost have said that it seemed frightened at its own power, and that it required to be contradicted in order to be re-assured. The whole of the Left went out; the Left Centre remained as silent lookers-on, refusing to speak or to vote, which, however, was also imposing.

‘In the evening, at Madame de Sainte-Aulaire’s, everybody was very excited. General Foy gave an



account of the sitting with his usual vivacity. He described it as he would have a military manoeuvre, saying that he had placed Manuel in the *centre*, that he had *flanked* him on the right and on the left, that the committees had been used as *ramparts*, and that he then said :

“ Now, let them come ! ”

‘ His account was witty and well told, but it was not serious. It all had just the appearance of men who had played their part well in the morning. He then read us the protestation which was to be signed by a hundred and five deputies. The next morning only sixty-two were found ready to do so. The Left Centre would not sign ; M. Royer-Collard dissuaded them from doing so.’

I agreed with M. Royer-Collard. In my case, it was rather a case of prejudice than of deep-seated conviction. ‘ What is the good of protesting,’ I said. It would have been a case of denouncing the measure whilst submitting to it ; it would be the last resource of mutes and of Helots ; if they were to limit themselves to that petition, it would be like striking the water with a sword, *telum imbellè sine ictu*, and, if they went further, if it was to be a question of retreating on to the *Mons Sacer*, if it was a question of deserting the Chamber

and the tribunes, that would indeed have been playing the part of dupes. I added that the attempt had been made in London in 1797; one fine morning, or, to speak more correctly, one fine evening, all the Opposition, Fox and Sheridan at their head, gave the House the slip, and declared that they would throw up the whole business. What did they gain by this? They were wished good-bye; the House did without their presence, and they were made fun of when they returned. When they came back, tired of the struggle, they had been playing their adversaries' game, and came into the House again with drooping ears, and with all the appearance of making a humble apology. As a general rule, such demonstrations have no sense and no weight, except in so far as they constitute an appeal to the people, and are the prelude of a revolution. I constantly repeated this to General Foy, to Casimir Perier, to Benjamin Constant, to all the members of the Left who remained on our side; I brought this Parliamentary anecdote before them: they shook their heads whilst listening to me, and took no notice of it; they were right and I was wrong.

Really, as the situation was not the same, the object and the success of the same line of conduct must necessarily be different.

The Whig Opposition, in 1797, had retired from vexation and discouragement, without any real or even apparent motive, because, as it had been for a long time in a minority, a minority which was gradually growing smaller, it had no chance of soon becoming a majority. It was a case of running off from the field of battle; it was a fit of temper at the expense of all principles: the motto of an Opposition is: *Etiam si omnes, non ego*; its place is to defend its ground, inch by inch; its game is to raise the voice all the more, that the farther it is from power, the greater freedom of speech it possesses. It was only natural that the Tory Ministry, having a majority within the House, and public opinion for it outside, turned the retreat of the Whigs into a rout, and their return to a *mea culpa*.

Our Opposition of the Left, on the other hand, had a manifest and legitimate motive for retiring: the tribune was enslaved; liberty of speech had been outraged and strangled by its leaders; it could no longer debate with honour and security. This was so true that it abstained from speaking, in spite of the friendly or ironical invitations which it continually received to do so; on its withdrawal, reason, right, the universal cry of an indignant people, were for it; lastly, and this was the principal point, there was a fixed and



necessary period for its return, when Manuel, who had only been excluded for a year, would re-enter as its leader, holding his head high, and having sworn to avenge himself. And so the effect of this retreat was good, both within and without, on friends and foes; my Anglomaniac pedantry was really, in this case, only a piece of folly.

Seeing that I am just now in the vein for confession, I will say a few words about Sergeant Mercier, that non-commissioned officer of the National Guard who, with his squad, refused to employ force to expel Manuel; what is to be thought of his refusal?

I must confess that I have several times changed my opinions about this matter.

At the first moment, I felt, and I acted, like everyone else; I clapped my hands in the gallery where I was sitting. The next day, I thought it very right that a crowd gathered before the shop of the said sergeant (he was a lace and trimming manufacturer, at No. 14, Rue aux Fers), and cried out as loudly as they could: '*Vive Mercier; vive la Garde Nationale!*'

I even thought it quite right that fine ladies, and my wife among them, should go to that shop, under the pretence of buying something, and shake hands with, and congratulate the Sergeant. But when I saw,—what

was almost certain to happen in this country of foolish people,—that admiration was turning into an ovation, the ovation into a triumph, and the triumph into a system ; when I saw that a breach of discipline was held as an act of bravery ; when I heard people talk about raising a subscription to present him with a sword of honour, and having medals struck *ad perpetuam rei memoriam*, all that caused me to reflect. It struck me that such an example was bad at a time when military revolutions were threatening to extend over the whole of Europe ; when the Riegos and the Quirogas, or the Carascosas and the Pepes, were setting up and upsetting Governments in a moment, and, that taking it all in all, a little less honour shown to Sergeant Mercier and his platoon, and rather less melodramatic show in the execution of an act of violence, the responsibility for which would always rest upon its real authors, would have been far better.

I have since then been led to return to this idea, no longer incidentally and in the heat of action, but on principle and with an unprejudiced mind. Having, during the short duration of the Martignac Ministry, been appointed *rapporteur* to the committee elected to sit on the reform of military tribunals, I had the opportunity of hearing the chief officers of our army

and the most learned magistrates of our Court of Cassation express their opinion on the nature and extent, on the conditions and requirements, of discipline; I had occasion to say a word on the matter, and I maintained the opinion that the term of passive obedience had no meaning; that no such thing as passive obedience existed for anyone, not even for a soldier in respect to his superior officer: that all obedience had its limit, and that in such a case the limit was in the evident illegality of the order: I proved this by a series of hypotheses to which no answer could be given, except how very unlikely it was that they should occur. 'If the officer,' I said, 'ordered a soldier to kill his father or his wife, might the soldier to obey?' 'That would never happen' was the answer I got. I quoted an actual example, and quite a recent one.

A patrol heard a noise in a public-house; they went in and found some drunkards fighting; the officer in command ordered his soldiers to arrest the delinquents, and to take them before the Commissary of Police. So far it was all well, and the officer was right; the soldiers obeyed, and so far all was as it should have been; but one of the prisoners escaped, and ran away as fast as he could; the officer commanded a soldier to

fire at the prisoner; he did so, and the prisoner fell dead.

This fact, I repeat, is true, and had happened only a few days before.

Nobody disputed that the officer was guilty of murder; but I went further, and maintained that the soldier who fired was in the same case; he must have known that, in time of peace, and towards fellow citizens, weapons ought never to be used, except to enforce his orders. I went even further than this; I maintained that in the case (and this point was granted) where the competence of military tribunals should for the future be restricted to crimes and offences committed against the orders of the service, officers and soldiers should be handed over to the ordinary tribunals, as if they had been accomplices in an ordinary murder. The debate in the commission was animated. I was supported, not only by the magistrates, but by several generals, amongst others by General Dode, who afterwards became a Marshal of France, and who was one of the most enlightened soldiers whom I have known; and I cannot tell what would have been the issue, if the end of the session, followed by the fall of the Martignac Ministry, had not put an end to our labours; but from this, one can see that I had overcome my scruples with

regard to Sergeant Mercier and his refusal. I have not changed my opinion since that time ; and would to God that in 1851 there had been some such sergeants as Mercier in the battalion of the Chasseurs de Vincennes which charged us with bayonets at the door of the Corps Législatif, and afterwards escorted us, like criminals, from the Mairie of the tenth arrondissement to the barracks on the Quay d'Orsay ; they would have spared France a disgraceful and oppressive Government, which is still in existence, and which does not seem likely to come to an end.\*

The retreat of the Left, and the silence of the Left Centre, having thus put an end to all discussion in the Chamber of Deputies, public attention was transferred to the debates in the House of Peers ; and the latter had all the honours of the close of the session. I had, or rather I accepted, a share—and a heavy one it was—of the burden. I had resolved to commit myself altogether, and without consideration, to the debate, and to push it as far as I legally could, and to cause the words which had been disgracefully and odiously stopped in Manuel's mouth to be listened to in the midst of a serious assembly which was honourable and moderate, though it was so more from reason than from timidity.

\* This was written in 1868.



The debate opened on March 14, on the Report of M. Laforêt; that Report was as dull as its author, which is not saying a little. It began with a speech by Marshal Jourdan, whom we had, contrary to his custom, induced to take the lead. It was a good choice: his name recalled only memories of glory and of freedom; his speech was good—it was serious, firm, and sensible. Marshal Jourdan was himself the author of it, without any of us having had any hand in it. This is the only time, if I am not mistaken, that his sincere patriotism did violence to his natural modesty.

He was ably and boldly supported by M. de Barante. The replies were as insignificant as those who delivered them; no Minister spoke. We saw clearly that they were going to renew the tactics which had succeeded so well in the other House; that, by allowing the debate to waver and to languish, they hoped to hasten the close of it. This trap having been discovered, I resolved, this time, to avoid it, and to fall upon the first speaker who might come under my hand; being decided to get rid of him in a few words, and sure of forcing M. de Chateaubriand to break his silence, by attacking the lengthy statement to which Manuel had not been allowed to reply, by following out his ideas to the end.

My opponent, therefore, more by chance than choice, was M. de Polignac, a man who, since then, attained to an unhappy celebrity; who was at that time our ambassador in London; and who, rather foolishly, tried to persuade us that the resistance of the English Ministry to our Spanish expedition was nothing more than a pretence, and that it had no other object than to act as a set-off to the pedantry of the Whigs and to the alarms of John Bull.

I did not stop to refute this puerile argument, which the House listened to, or rather heard without listening to it. I at once and fully entered into the question, and I at once assumed the offensive against the common enemy, the real author of the war in Spain, the only man who, in this matter, was worth reckoning with.

As against him, I reminded the House of what is the real right of a representative Government to declare war or to sign peace; the real principles of the right of intervention, according to the rules of International Law, and contrasting these principles with the twofold series of grievances which were alleged against Spain—both those which the Government regarded as affecting our material interests, and those the redress of which it claimed, in the name of religion and of morality, as a right descended from heaven,—I pointed out the

childish folly of the first and the oratorical folly of the others with a degree of clearness which, in my opinion, could not be, and which certainly was not, replied to.

I will here give a few extracts from my speech :

‘ What are we seeking ?—What does the Government want ?—Does it want to conquer Spanish provinces ? Please God, not. Is it going to forestall Spain ?—Does it wish to prevent some act of unjust aggression on the part of our neighbours ? Just as little. It is well known that Spain is poor, without an army, devoid of any resources, and does not threaten the territory of any country.

‘ Our commercial relations with the Peninsula are menaced ; it is necessary to re-establish them. I, for my part, consent to this . . . . If the interruption of our commercial relations resulted in any way from the Government of the Cortes—from a customs tariff, for instance—we could hope, perhaps, to have this tariff revoked, sword in hand ; it would still, however, remain to be seen whether, on the one hand, the matter was just, and, on the other, whether it was reasonable ; but since, as is the case, our stagnation of trade with Spain springs from the poverty of the country, from the deplorable state of its industries, from the fact that it is incapable of finding market for

our goods, or of producing any which we can use, it is, in fact, the strangest remedy for such a state of affairs to invade that country, and consequently to expose it to devastation, to requisitions, and to pillage.

‘ On the other side of the Pyrenees we want a safe ally, we want a strong one ! And, in order to preserve that ally, whom we already have, who has never failed us, whose fidelity is beyond reproach, we are going to attack him and to make an enemy of him ; and in order to make him strong we are going to expose him to civil and to foreign war.

‘ On that frontier we must be safe from all anxiety, so that we may be in a condition to extend our forces along the Rhine, and to assume that rank in Europe which belongs to us. And in order to attain that object, we are about to send all the troops we can spare across the Pyrenees ; we are going to evacuate our garrisons and our fortified places, and thus we shall, in a measure, be left at the mercy of a *coup de main*. And why ? To establish a Government at Madrid which we shall have to support if it is in danger, and to set up again if it falls ; for here facts plead more loudly than arguments. What was required after an expedition of this nature to Naples ? what was required at Turin ? . . .

‘I am now,’ I continued, ‘approaching a subject which it is difficult to treat with propriety, but which I cannot altogether leave unnoticed. I am going to deal with the motives for war, which our opponents never express in categorical terms, but which, nevertheless, are only too intimately interwoven into the thread of their speeches, and which too frequently stand out in relief in their most striking phrases, to allow me to leave them undiscussed.

‘Like our own king, the King of Spain is the grandson of Louis XIV. The brothers of the King of Spain deserve our respect on the same score ; now, the King of Spain is a prisoner in his palace, and the external respect which is paid him hardly disguises this state of captivity ; such a humiliation inflicted on a king who has sprung from the blood of our kings reflects directly on the Crown of France—it is an insult to our own king ; can we, after that, help ourselves from taking up arms ? Are not the insults offered to the blood of Louis XIV. common to all Frenchmen ?

‘I deny formally, as a principle of international law, the existence of that solidarity which people claim to introduce between houses occupying different thrones ; I deny formally, that from the close intercourse resulting from alliance and relationship, which may exist

between royal families, a right of mutual guardianship and supervision of one kingdom over the other can be deduced ; I formally deny, that from the mere fact that two kings are descended from the same ancestor, no matter in what degree, the result is that the one ought to avenge the real or pretended injuries of the other.

‘ What would become of the peace of the world, and of the independence of States, if ever such a principle were to prevail ?

‘ What ! because a hundred years ago a King of France might have given his daughter in marriage to an Emperor of Russia, would this daughter have brought, as a marriage-portion to her husband, the right to intervene in the quarrels which our kings might have with their people ? Could that daughter have bequeathed to her descendants the right to send swarms of Tartars and Cossacks amongst us, every time any one of them might fancy that a remote cousin of his was not being treated by his French subjects with the same amount of servile adoration which he himself might exact from his subjects, who were half of them serfs, and half of them barbarians ? What ! because the House of Bourbon has given a sovereign to Spain, another to the kingdom of the Two Sicilies, another to the principality of Lucca ; because the House of Austria

has given a grand-duke to Tuscany, because the majority of German princes are united by more or less close bonds of relationship, is it to be supposed that as soon as one of these princes thinks himself offended, such offence is to be looked upon as having been offered to all those who are nearly or closely related to him? In such a case, every disturbance in Europe would become the signal for a general conflagration.

‘According to this idea, such alliances between ruling houses—these relationships between sovereigns, which have, by-the-bye, done so much harm and so little good, which have so often furnished pretexts for war, and which have only rarely prevented it—those marriages, those ties of blood, would become a real scourge for the people. But, happily, there is nothing in it; the principle has never been accepted by statesmen, nor recognised in diplomacy. States are independent one of the other, and crowns are so no less; sovereigns, no matter what personal ties unite them, have no other reciprocal obligations but those which are the result of the law of nations and of the stipulations of treaties. The King of France belongs to us; his honour is ours, his dignity is that of the French nation, of which he is the head within the country and the representative without; and never, when more regard

has been paid to the simple notions of good sense than to the pompousness of words, when men have reasoned as public men and as rhetoricians, anyone has seriously advanced the proposition that a nation can consider itself insulted in the person of a foreign prince.'

This last phrase stung my opponent to the quick. I continued, and coming to the first of the two points on which Manuel had been interrupted by the vociferations of the Right, I said :

'Here ends the series of motives which justify a war with Spain, if one limits one's self to looking at it solely from its aspect with regard to France ; but here, on the other hand, begins quite a new train of ideas : the question alters its aspect, extends itself and grows more lofty.

'We are told that it is not a question of insisting on *minutiæ*. Is it proposed to us to take up arms in defence of some of those more or less frivolous grievances which have often led nations mutually to destroy each other ? Is it a question of possessing ourselves of some wretched paltry town, of some fishery on some distant shore, of the monopoly of sugar, of indigo, of cochineal ? No, we are called upon to undertake a regular crusade.

'Social order is shaken to its foundations, and it



must be strengthened. The Hydra of revolutions is again raising one of its heads, and it must at once be cut off. In support of these weighty interests, what are the sacrifices required? It is not France attacking Spain; it is society which being menaced in its very existence is defending itself; it is the advanced guard of civilization which moves in order to exterminate barbarism.

‘These are indeed grand words; they strike the ear in a wonderful manner. Let us, however, take care not to be caught by them; do not let us give ourselves up to our first impulses without examination.

‘We are going to enter upon a war of principles. What principle is it that fires us with such zeal? It is a war of doctrine which we are going to undertake. What is that doctrine which is to illuminate the French, which is to tear them from repose, and from their hearths, and to hurry them onwards to the cry of: “*Dieu le veut*”?

‘The principle is this:

‘It had been foreseen at an early period, at the very time of the formation of the Holy Alliance, by shrewd and far-seeing men; it was laid down by the Holy Alliance itself in the circular of Laibach, and put into force in Naples and Piedmont. Having, doubtless,

been reproduced at the Congress of Verona, it was taken up by the Ministers of the King of France, who put it into the mouth of their august master at the opening of the Session.

‘Here it is,’ I said, ‘stripped of the emphatic and honeyed language which surrounds it, reduced to its real and positive meaning, and commented upon and fully explained by the conduct of the allied Powers towards Spain.

‘Every revolution, no matter what it be, is not only a disorder as regards the Government which suffers from it, but an attack on civilization in general. Every nation which claims its rights, and a liberty which its Government denies it, is a nation of freebooters and of pirates, which ought to be outlawed by Europe. Constitutions have no legitimate source except absolute power. Absolute power grants them when and how it pleases. If it does not grant them, nations must not enjoy them. Every Government which springs from a revolution is a monster which ought to be crushed as soon as possible.

‘And this is what we are taught without restriction, without limit, without reserve. There is no distinction made between one revolution and another: however unjust or oppressive, however destructive of the rights

and of the happiness of humanity a Government may be, however wise, prudent and moderate the reformers, that does not matter: they must all be involved in the same anathema. Washington is no better than Cataline; there is no difference between William Tell and the fierce wretch who led the sections on the 31st of May and the 10th of August—between the Prince of Orange, who delivered the Netherlands, and Robespierre or Babœuf; they and their imitators are all revolutionaries, who must be exterminated for that very reason.

‘That is not all.

‘There are no obligations which must be regarded as sacred toward a Government which has its origin in a revolution. A sovereign who has sworn to maintain a constitution which he has granted himself is not bound by his oath. Foreign kings who, voluntarily and freely, have entered into relations with that Government, are not bound by the faith of treaties. No engagement is binding, no lapse of time obtains it as a right. Ambassadors who are sent and received prove nothing. Such Governments can be recognised in formal terms; for years even they can be encouraged and caressed, as long as it is in the interest of other nations to do so, but as soon as that interest ceases, one has the right to deny and to destroy them.

‘Such is, gentlemen, the reasonable, humane, magnanimous principle which the mighty rulers of the world have, for the last two years, undertaken to bring to light. Such is the doctrine for which we Frenchmen are now supposed to become enthusiastic—we who passed through thirty years of revolution—we who nevertheless owe to that revolution—whatever may be its errors and crimes—the laws which govern us and the public establishments, which are our glory and our prosperity—we who have lived under and served the various governments that sprung from that revolution and administered the law in their name. If the fact of the Spaniards now repelling our aggression makes them rebels and traitors, what have we been for thirty years ?

‘I shall not lay stress on this subject ; it was well and boldly treated by the honourable Marshal who opened the debate to-day. It belongs to the victor of Fleurus to protest, in the name of his brethren in arms, against a war which would be the condemnation of our former resistance and victories ; we listened to him with the respect that is due to his distinguished services and to his high character. I have neither talent nor sufficient authority to repeat now what he himself said to you ; but what he has not said, I will say.

‘If I wished audaciously to maintain the right of

the strongest in utter disregard of the right of nations, which governs the mutual relations of peoples, I should invoke the principle laid down by the Holy Alliance. If I wished audaciously to establish the right of the strongest as against public right, which in every State governs relations between the sovereigns and their subjects, I should adduce the doctrine of the Holy Alliance.

‘What, in fact, is this principle, if not the consecration of the right of the strongest, both within and without different States ?

‘It is the right of the strongest without ; because there does not exist any Government on earth which does not go back, more or less remotely, to a revolution or a usurpation ; since there is none which, within the memory of man, has descended from heaven, there exists none to which its neighbour might not impute the crime of its origin. It is a perpetual subject of aggression between different States. If Russia, which within the last two centuries can reckon almost as many revolutions as there have been reigns—which recognised, in unequivocal terms, the constitution of the Cortes in 1812, which, since 1820, has received a Spanish Minister, and has kept one at Madrid—if Russia, I say, has the right suddenly to break with

TO OVERTHROW ALL REVOLUTION.  
COURT IS ABSOLUTE - ANARCHY!

Spain, to work in order to destroy the Government of the Cortes, on the pretext that that Government has sprung from a revolution, and is therefore unworthy to figure in the confederation of civilized States, what Government can think itself in safety ?

‘It will, therefore, be a misfortune for the United States if the forces of the Holy Alliance can ever cross the Atlantic; for the United States, forty years ago, threw off the English yoke by force of arms. It will be a misfortune for England herself if the Straits of Dover and her powerful navy are no longer an impregnable rampart for her; for about a hundred and thirty years ago she expelled the Stuarts by force of arms. It will be a misfortune for the United Provinces and for the Netherlands, for who can hinder the King of Prussia, their neighbour, from attacking them, since by force of arms they got rid of the rule of a barbarous master? Woe to the Helvetian republics! the Emperor of Austria will doubtless take possession of them, because they were guilty of the same crime towards his ancestors. Woe, lastly, to Sweden, which is under the hand of Russia, for, not fifteen years ago, she placed on her throne a French general, and her deposed king at this present moment is wandering about the cities of Germany.

‘Such is the lot which awaits all Constitutional States if the Holy Alliance is consistent. As for despotic Governments, I should not dare to say that the danger was the same for them ; not, indeed, because they are free from revolutions, but because it seems admitted that absolute power purifies all it touches.

‘As to the interior of States, what can be thought of this principle, and in what does it differ from the mad doctrine of Divine right?

‘What ! can the power of giving nations political institutions, and of destroying or refusing them, reside exclusively and perpetually in kings ? Can a king, at all times, and by his own mere will, abolish public law in his country, and substitute another law for it, or not substitute any at all ? The King of Spain, on returning to his country after five years of exile, seizes absolute power, and submits the nation which has delivered Europe to the most humiliating yoke ; he is acting rightly, not a voice amongst the sovereigns is raised to contradict him ; he even receives congratulations and praises from all sides ! This power is destroyed in his hands by his own fault, and at once a great noise arises ; all Europe must take arms in order to restore it to him in all its purity and plenitude. One

will be very glad, if afterwards he will consent to yield a little of his power to his subjects ; but if he claims to keep the whole of it, no conditions must be imposed on him. And, moreover, whatever use his councillors may make of it, to whatever excesses they may go, of whatever acts of violence they may be guilty, for all this they will be only responsible to God ; and if the Spanish nation, ruined, persecuted, reduced to extremities, driven to despair, rises at last, and, without any attack on the person of the Prince, or on his hereditary rights, invokes and consecrates a new order of things, that nation shall be looked upon as an assemblage of bandits, who must be chastised and muzzled afresh. The right of resistance to tyranny must have surely disappeared from the face of the earth !'

Here M. de Chateaubriand interrupted me in a contemptuous manner.

'Of what right are you speaking ?' he said to me.

'Of the right of resisting tyranny,' I replied, looking him straight in the face, and raising my voice ; then I went on :

'Gentlemen, I deeply regret having to utter these words ; I know that I am walking on hot coals.

'As well as anybody else, I know that this terrible right, the use of which requires so much circumspection,





world, and which were not satisfied to live unconscious of their own strength and rights, like powerless instruments in the hands of Providence, broke their fetters, left traces of their moral grandeur, and bequeathed to posterity noble examples of liberty and of virtue. The finest pages of history are devoted to celebrating those glorious citizens who have delivered their country; and when, from the heights to which those thoughts raise us, we look down upon the present state of Europe, when we consider that it is these very Cabinets which we have seen for thirty years so complaisant towards all the different Governments which have sprung from our revolution, which have successively treated with the Convention, sought for the friendship of the Directory, and courted the alliance of the devastator of the world, when we think that it is these very Ministers whom we have seen so anxious to be present at the Conference of Erfurt, who come, and gravely from their sovereign knowledge and full authority, abuse the cause for which Hampden died on the field of honour and Lord William Russell on the scaffold, we really feel inclined to blush; we are tempted to ask ourselves: Who are these men who thus, with a stroke of the pen, claim to destroy what we have always admired, what we learnt in our youth as the very notions of what is good and just? What

right have they to say, as the Pope said to the Frank who first sat on the throne of Gaul, "Burn what thou hast adored, and adore what thou hast burnt."

If I write down thus at length fragments of a speech which has since been forgotten like its subject and its author, it is not from vanity. I have been vain in my time, like everyone else, perhaps I am so still without knowing it; but what I wish to prove here is, how far freedom of speech could go, at a time when the Restoration—nay, the Royalist reaction was most powerful—in a Chamber which was, to a great extent, composed of *émigrés*, of courtiers and of ecclesiastics, when the speaker was in the right, and could not be suspected of any mental reservation. I went as far as any Parliamentary speaker ever did in England; I went much further than Manuel did; not that I had more courage, for no one could possess more of it than he did, but because there was much ground to suspect him, and none me.

I continued, and coming to the difficult point which brought about his discomfiture, I said: 'They try to represent the revolution in Spain to us under the darkest colours, like a monstrous assemblage of all sorts of deeds of violence; as sullied, or ready to sully itself, with all sorts of crimes, causing blood to flow in

streams, and in the dark fostering regicide, which is already raising its hideous head.

‘ If these assertions were well founded, if our expedition into Spain had no other object but to stop bloodshed, above all, if a foreign invasion were not infinitely more likely to increase than to prevent those evils, I would consider the matter.

‘ But of what crimes are they speaking, those who depict to us the Spanish revolution in such horrible colours? Is it of those which have been already committed, or of those which, according to our adversaries, the revolution is destined to commit some day?

‘ If the latter, I protest emphatically. I deny that any man on earth has a right to impute to his fellow-men abominable crimes because, owing to the preoccupied or to the prejudiced state of his mind, he presumes that his fellow-men will commit such crimes some day or other.

‘ I do not recognise in any man on earth the right to overwhelm his fellow-men with the most odious names, only because he conjectures that these men may deserve such names some day or other.

‘ What! because you think that you notice some similarity between the constitution of the Cortes and that of 1791, because you find some resemblance

between two or three more or less remarkable events of our revolution and two or three others in that of Spain, you fancy that you have the right to conclude that the Reign of Terror is going to begin in Spain, and display all its atrocities there ! And what would you say if some perverse minds, noticing some more or less striking analogy between the Restoration in France and in England, would dare to imply that the excesses which disgraced the last years of the reign of the Stuarts were reserved for us ; that some day we should see civil and religious liberty choked, scaffolds erected in all our provinces, the Jeffreys and the Kirkes insulting their victims before sacrificing them ! You would indignantly repudiate such a prophecy, and you would be right ; I should do like you. But do not fall into the same error.

‘ I have read in an official document, bearing the name of a Minister of the King, the following sentence, which, I confess, quite astounded me : “ I do not wish to calumniate the Spaniards, yet I do not wish to estimate them more than I do my own countrymen. Revolutionary France produced a national convention ; why should not revolutionary Spain produce one also ? ” What an incredible abuse of antithesis ! what a strange use of simile and induction !

‘I also am a Frenchman; doubtless not a better one than the Minister who is the author of this sentence, but quite as good as he; I am, however, a man, first of all, and I do not despair of my fellow-men; I do not think that they are destined to revolve in one eternal circle of fury and crimes; I am a citizen of a free country, and as such I protest, not without emotion, against this unheard-of proposition: “Because I presume, rightly or wrongly, that some day you will commit a crime, therefore I have the right—I, who possess no authority over you, whom you have not wronged, to whom you are a perfect stranger—to lay hold of and to exterminate you at once.”

‘I will add that if—from which may it please Heaven to preserve us, the presentiments of our opponents were well founded, if the life of the King of Spain were really in danger, if his person were really exposed to men who were as violent, as carried away by, and as excited in their passions as they are represented to us, I do not know anything that would be more imprudent or more immoral than to keep constantly repeating these words of regicide and parricide. I do not know anything that would be more imprudent or immoral than to overwhelm men with the epithets of traitors and of criminals—than to represent them to themselves as

under the yoke of a blind fatality, and as being dragged towards the abyss by irresistible fate. Take care, if your apprehensions are sincere, not to accustom their ears to such abominable names; take care not to choke in their hearts that involuntary shudder which the aspect of crime always causes a man who has not yet made up his mind to it; above all, take care not to disguise to their fascinated eyes, under the ideas of danger, of resistance, and of national independence—which ideas always possess some kind of grandeur—the terrible idea of a terrible crime!

These last words were received with unanimous approval. They were, for all that, nearly the same which had been violently stopped in the mouth of Manuel.

I descended from the tribune without having been interrupted by the slightest sign of disapproval: the Chamber had listened to me with that involuntary and continued shudder which one feels when one sees a man walking on a precipitous bank; when, according to custom, the impression of my speech was put to the vote, the President put the question in a stammering voice, and scarcely a hand was raised against it.

M. de Chateaubriand put off his reply to the next day. It is not for me to give any estimate of it, but I may be allowed to recall the fact that, rightly or

wrongly, the general impression was that it was weak, vague, and desultory; I will add, and this is characteristic, that of all the attacks which I aimed at his policy, that is to say, at the policy of which he was the chief author, one only seemed to have touched him to the quick—it was when I reproached him for using sonorous phrases and rhetorical arguments. I hastened, as was right, to dress the wound, by disavowing, rather ironically, any personal allusion. M. de Chateaubriand had this certificate of good language inscribed in a foot-note to his speech, which was carefully reproduced at full length.

The debate finished there, and was resumed in the two Chambers the next month, on the occasion of a Bill for calling out the veterans, a Bill which was not opposed in the Chamber of Deputies—which was devoid of all opposition—but which was resisted in the House of Peers by M. Molé in a speech which had been prepared for the previous discussion, and which had remained in his pocket-book.

Everything having now been said, repeated and contradicted, the gauntlet which had been thrown down on this side of the Pyrenees having been promptly taken up on the other, all that remained to do was to proceed from words to actions. The very day of the definitive vote,



at the moment when the President from his chair was calling out the numbers in a loud voice, M. de Chauvelin, who was present at the sitting as a mere onlooker, said, turning to his neighbours on the right: 'Gentlemen, the time has now come when events must speak for themselves.' There was no need for him to pass that remark; for everyone felt the truth of it at the bottom of his heart; everyone saw that the House of Bourbon was playing its last card; that it was a game of odds or evens, double or quits.

The Dauphin had left Paris at the beginning of March. On his arrival at Bayonne, he found the expeditionary army, that army which had been formed the year before, with disorder rampant in every corps and treason in some; nothing was ready, no provisions in store, no horses for the guns or waggons; facing the outposts there was a small army, commanded by Carrel and Fabvier—who played the part of revolutionist Condés—which held out its hands to its brothers-in-arms, and circulated freely in their barracks an infamous song of Beranger; and, to crown all this, the Parisian police was installed in the very midst of the headquarters of the general staff, and causing the first aide-de-camp of the chief of the staff to be arrested, with a great deal of fuss, so that the Minister of War

himself came up at the noise all this made, and was at his wits' ends as to what to do or think.

It was lucky for Louis XVIII. to have given the command of that army to the eldest of his nephews, instead of to the youngest, and, indeed, instead of to anyone else. A moment of hesitation, and all would have been lost : the army would have forsaken its chief ; it would have followed the unworthy suggestion of the poet ; it would have turned right about face, and marched to Paris with hostile intentions.

The good sense and the honesty of the Dauphin, his presence of mind, his firmness and decision, were admirable. The word is not too strong ; it was to the resolution which he took at once, and which he alone, from his character and position, could take, to the bold resolution to dismiss the Minister of War without listening to him ; to confide the military chest and the direction of all the services to the adventurous but fertile genius of Ouvrard, to entrust himself to the fidelity of the general officers who were denounced to him, and to that power which the honour of the flag exercises even on a soldier who is wavering in his allegiance, that the success of the beginning of the campaign, and consequently of the campaign itself, was due.

I shall return to this subject when I come to speak

of the occasion which presented itself to me, a little later, to render striking justice to the conduct of the Dauphin in all this, an occasion which I seized eagerly, so as to separate, as far as depended on me, my cause from that of the revolutionists, as I did not share either their implacable hatred or their culpability.

The beginning of the campaign had fully succeeded ; the counter-emigration having dispersed, without striking a blow, the population receiving us with open arms, and our money with still more open hands, the ground for discussion became very bad for us ; it would have been better if we had kept quiet for a while, and allowed difficulties to arise, before returning to the charge ; but in politics the Opposition proposes and the Ministry disposes ; and on April 5 the Ministry thought fit to call out the class of 1823, which according to the recruiting laws should not have been called until 1824 ; the Bill was introduced into the Chamber of Deputies, April 10, and carried almost without debate on the 23rd, and was brought up to us on the 25th.

What was to be done ?

Ought we to imitate the silence of the Opposition in the other Chamber without having the same excuse ? Should we, on the other hand, accept the challenge, and renew the attack at the certain risk of a numerical

defeat, at the almost certain risk of being forsaken by the opinion which had supported us hitherto, that happy and foolish opinion which is regulated by the success of the moment. *Stultissimus rerum humanarum iudex eventus.*

After weighing everything well, we considered that our honour demanded that we should persevere, except that we might alter our course a little, and direct our efforts to the weak side of the enemy.

The documents which had recently been laid upon the table of the House of Commons in England suggested this new turn to us, by acquainting us with the questions asked and the engagements entered on at Verona—engagements which justified our concluding that, in our expedition to Spain, the armies of Austria, Prussia, and Russia would, in a manner, form the rearguard of ours. In those engagements we detected, as we thought—and our error, if it was one, was very natural—the development of the plan of universal servitude, of which the Holy Alliance seemed to be only the prelude and the programme—that plan of mutual agreement between the great against the second-rate Powers, and against their own subjects, which aimed at nothing less than at making a universal monarchy of Europe, under a collective title. We foresaw in that, in case of a defeat befalling our arms,

foreign armies marching through and occupying France, under the pretence of assisting her.

It was with this idea that M. Molé opened fire with a clever and vigorous speech, which soon afterwards, when reproduced and annotated by M. de Barante, forced M. de Montmorency to explain himself, as well as he could, concerning what had been said and done, and what had been demanded and obtained at the Congress of Verona; in short, to treat us to quite a new version of this matter, and one which did not agree at all with that of his successor, and still less with that of the British Cabinet.

That contradiction, which betrayed the diversity of views and of lines of action, did not allow M. de Chateaubriand to keep silence; he had expected it before, for he had his speech in his pocket. But, as almost always happens in similar cases, this speech, prepared beforehand, not having foreseen the incidents of the moment, and not giving any good answers to new objections, seemed cold, embarrassed, disconnected, and did not satisfy anyone; it, however, afforded me a fine opportunity.

I took advantage of it too well, for I went too far—too far, I mean, for the temper of the Chamber, which listened to me and for the real interests of my cause,

for I did not say anything which went beyond the limits of legitimate discussion in a free country and under a regular Government.

I accepted all the challenges which were offered us gladly and at once; I rendered all the snares useless by exposing them, by calling men and things by their real and fitting names; I took my stand, returning blow for blow on every ground on which the Government tried to bring us.

On being reproached with ardently wishing for peace, seeing that we refused to grant Government the necessary men and money to enforce it, I answered that, as the war was unjust and absurd, the real means of cutting it short was to make it impossible, and by those means to overthrow a Government for whom war was an aim, a pressing interest, and a necessary condition of existence.

On being taunted with isolating France in Europe, and depriving her of any allies for the future in case she should break her engagements entered into at the Congress of Verona, I answered that we had gone to look for masters and not for allies at Verona; that there our army had been made the advanced guard, the standard-bearer, the herald of arms of the Holy Alliance; that a step further and it would cease to be

at the orders of the King, to go over to the orders of auxiliaries, who would make it march and fight, whether it liked it or not, at the point of the sword.

What I advanced I proved.

M. de Montmorency had signed the clauses agreed upon at Verona, or, rather, he had suggested them on his own account, and contrary to his formal instructions. The King and the Cabinet had disavowed him; he had been obliged to resign. They tried to act independently from the other signatories, and to act in an opposite direction; but it was all in vain; they were obliged to give up their intention, and to declare war, however reluctantly.

‘The future is written there,’ I said.

‘If we should ever be obliged to reopen any negotiations with the Government of the Cortes—in a word, to treat with the Spanish revolution, it would be necessary, if I may use the famous expression of the President of the Council, to defend it on the Rhine.

‘Would it then be time to answer those who asked, with painful anxiety, “Will foreigners march through France?”—would it be time, I ask, to answer them then with the confidence to which the Minister for Foreign Affairs has just given expression, “Never!” And how could France receive that help in Spain, which she has

asked of her allies, without granting them a passage? We should, therefore, have to make up our minds to see them echeloned on our territory, establishing their lines of communication in our departments, garrisoning our towns, Paris becoming in its turn the seat of a Congress, and the Chamber deliberating there for the future under the eyes of the Allied Sovereigns with that degree of liberty which the Diets of Poland enjoyed from 1772 to 1795!

‘What situation will then be ours?’

‘Our Ministers, thank God, do not appeal to foreign armies; they will even take measures to prevent their coming; but what will they say to them to stop them? Will they invoke the sacred principle of the independence of States? If so, what will they have done with this principle? Will they not have established, as a matter of doctrine, and realized in fact, the abominable maxim, that as soon as one Government notices some symptoms of disorder in another—some agitation which reveals the progress of a spirit of innovation, or of the violence of factions—it has the right to invade that State by force of arms, to overturn its institutions, and to occupy it with troops?’

‘Will they try to resist? But what will be their means of resistance when our soldiers are at the



other end of Spain, our arsenals empty, our strongholds without garrisons, and our treasury penniless?

‘We shall then be obliged to witness an insolent soldiery return within our walls; they will require us, in the names of their masters, both to muzzle the small amount of the liberty of the press which remains to us, to suffocate freedom of speech in the tribune, and to open the State prisons in order to bury the moving spirits in them, for their good. And, be quite sure of this, that this is the veritable aim of that crusade which is beginning now by Spain, but which really is aimed at us; it is not the debates in the Spanish Cortes, it is not the revolutionary principles of Spain, which are really troubling absolute monarchs; the liberty of the press in France, the tribune in the French Chambers, the truths which spring from it in the universal language of Europe, these are the real enemies of the Holy Alliance, these are the enemies which they wish to exterminate!

‘And when the attempt is carried into effect, what a spectacle will the continent of Europe present! Spain in the military occupation of France; Italy in the military occupation of Austria; France in the military occupation of a combined army; Germany in the military occupation of Russia. Everywhere the

brutality of the soldier and the despotism of the sword.'

These last words excited a movement of impatience, accompanied by a suppressed murmur; but I had taken my stand on unassailable ground; it was impossible to interrupt me without being overwhelmed by the reply, and I finished with the following peroration:

'As for myself, I have to-day paid my debt and quieted my conscience; I have never fulfilled a more painful duty. We are soon going to separate; who can tell under what auspices we may meet again?—who knows whether it will be again possible to raise one's voice freely within these walls, and to discuss the interests of France and of Europe honestly and sincerely here? It has happened to me more than once to ascend this tribune in order to combat measures which were contrary to the liberty of citizens, but those were only passing attacks of small importance, which could easily be repealed by the same authority which had passed them. To-day I have just made a last effort, a useless and despairing effort in favour of the independence of nations. I, many a time before, have ascended this tribune when the capital of France was still a prey to foreign bayonets; but then at least, whilst we were suffering from the laws of war, we foresaw our forth-

coming liberation ; the Ministers who directed public affairs devoted their days and their nights to that noble task. The man whom the King's confidence had placed at the head of his councils put his glory in fulfilling it ; though educated abroad, and bound by every sacred tie of gratitude to a powerful monarch of the North, this man, nevertheless, bore in his bosom a thoroughly French heart. He abhorred foreign dominion ; he was worthy of giving, as he did, his master the generous counsel to risk his crown in order to wear it with honour. And so, in spite of his errors, though he often made mistakes, although he handed us over to the present administration, his memory will remain dear to good men, and the deliverance of France will absolve him from every reproach. But what judgment would posterity pass on those who, having received from his hands a flourishing, free, and peaceful country, would by their want of skill, their weakness, and their wretched tergiversations, have again let loose on us the scourge of foreign invasion ? Would they be allowed to justify themselves by alleging the purity of their intentions, which I am sure is very real ; by their want of foresight—which is certainly very great—or even by their fears, well or ill founded, for the security of the throne ? No ; inexorable posterity would not

accept even that last excuse. As there are duties, feelings, principles for the upholding of which an honourable man would risk his head if it were required of him, so there are also duties, feelings, principles for the maintenance of which a Government must be ready, if needful, to sacrifice its very existence. The maxim that States and Kings are justified to resort to any means to preserve their existence deserves eternal disgrace ! No ; the safety of the people is not the supreme law ; no, the safety of princes is not the supreme law. Virtue is the supreme law ; the supreme law is moral dignity, whether a kingdom or a life is the stake ; it is not allowable for any man to advise another either to do, or to say, or to concede in secret what he would not dare to avow—it is not allowable for any man to advise another to commit himself :

“ *Et propter vitam vivendi perdere causas.* ”

I left the tribune and resumed my seat amidst such a silence that one might have heard a pin drop. Not a Minister rose to answer me, and no one spoke in reply. Some of my friends having, according to custom, demanded that my speech should be printed, the Chamber negatived the motion by a small majority ; the minority in my favour was also small. In the conversations which followed, after the sitting was

over, no one blamed me, and no one strongly supported me. I had evidently gone beyond proper limits.

This was the first time, under the Restoration, that the Chamber of Peers signified their disapproval of me by refusing to have one of my speeches printed.

This sitting of April 10 only preceded the close of the Session by nine days. I took no part in the debate on the estimates, nor on that of the Budget for 1824; these debates were very animated, in spite of the absence of the Left and the silence of the Left Centre in the Chamber. The Ministry was violently attacked by its own friends; the Extreme Left followed the Extreme Right.

Neither did I take any part in several proposals, which were important enough in themselves, but which had no results. Amongst others, that of M. Ferrand, on the government of religious female congregations, and that of M. Pasquier to strike out from our code the crime of tampering with soldiers in time of peace. The detestable affair of Carron was, if not the cause, at least the occasion of this proposal, and M. de Peyronnet had the unfortunate courage to oppose it, with his hands still, so to say, stained with the blood of that unhappy man. That horrified all who were led astray by party-spirit.

When the Session was over, there was nothing to detain me in Paris. As the château of Broglie was not yet habitable, I went to Coppet with my family. There I learnt successively the series of events for which our debates had prepared the way.

On March 20, after a long resistance and several changes of Ministers, which did not at all alter the situation, the King of Spain, in spite of his repugnance, had consented, with very bad grace, to leave Madrid. He had, on April 10, taken up his abode at Seville. It was almost on that very day that the Duc d'Angoulême crossed the Bidassoa. On May 24, Madrid fell into the power of the French ; whilst General Molitor pursued the Spanish armies into Arragon, General Bourke into Galicia, and General Moncey into Catalonia.

On June 11, our army took possession of Cordova, and, on the 12th, the Cortes, after having deposed the King—that is deposed provisionally, after having transferred the royal authority to a Provisional Government—took the road to Cadiz with him.

Everywhere the Spanish armies fled or were dispersed ; everywhere their generals acted as traitors or deserters.

On June 24, the French army arrived before Cadiz,

and commenced siege operations. On August 8, the Dauphin tried to put an end to the reactionary fury, by publishing the ordinance of Andujar, a generous attempt, which was disavowed in Paris. On the 26th, he arrived to direct the siege himself; on the 30th, he carried the Trocadero; on October 1, after very many useless negotiations, Cadiz capitulated; the King of Spain was liberated, the Cortes dispersed, and absolute power again entered into its course of sanguinary follies.

I must add that in Portugal, under the auspices of our invasion of Spain, the counter-revolution worked of itself, and by a purely internal movement; having begun on February 3, by a rising in arms on the part of Count of Almarante, it ended June 2, by the almost voluntary dispersal of the Cortes, and of this outbreak, which, after invading the two peninsulas, threatened to extend over the whole of Europe, nothing remained but a recollection, wherein ridicule exceeded interest.

It was a severe blow for those who, like me, whilst looking on the military revolutions of Spain and Italy as foolish and criminal, had taken part with all their heart against the military interventions of France and Austria. We were, in spite of ourselves, dragged into the fray, and the aristocracy of Geneva, the habitués of

Madame Necker's little Tuesday reunions, could hardly look at me without laughing.

The spirit of reaction, moreover, awoke with victory, even in Switzerland. The Jesuits of Fribourg obtained from the Supreme Council of that canton a decree to close the establishment of Father Girard. Diplomatic notes flocked to Berne. The Holy Alliance loudly demanded the expulsion of the refugees, and severe measures against the press; the Representative Council of Geneva passed a press censorship for a year by a majority of two-thirds of the votes.

I was very unhappy and irritated by all this; like a snail, I crept into my shell. I forced myself to shut my eyes so as not to see, and my ears, so as not to hear anything. As far as I could, I buried myself in my work. Montesquieu says, somewhere or other, that he never experienced any trouble for which one hour of serious occupation would not console him. Heaven preserve me from saying the same; but often during the course of my public life I recognised the fact, that disinterested work is the true remedy for the disappointments of vanity and ambition.

I gave myself up to it now with all my heart; for the opportunity was good. I did still more. From that time I laid down a rule of conduct, which I have



always followed since, and which has served me as a refuge in all the circumstances of my life and of my public career. That rule was to collect, for the sake of reference, the reflexions which the course and the diversity of my studies successively suggested to me, so as to have under my hand several works begun, which works I looked at, out of the corners of my eyes, with regret when I could not busy myself with them, and which I always took up again with pleasure and *con amore* when I had a little leisure. For the last ten years they have been the charm of my retreat and the consolation of my old age.

I began, in 1823, with political economy.

I had several ideas on that subject which were altogether my own, and not borrowed from anyone—ideas which I believe to be correct, and of a nature to throw a new light on the most difficult and controverted questions of that science. I tried to explain them well to myself, by drawing up a general outline of them, under the title of ‘*Introduction à l’Etude de l’Economie Politique*’ (An Introduction to the Study of Political Economy).

I shall have occasion to explain, later on, for what reasons, without giving it up entirely, I could not carry out my scheme. Amongst my papers will be found

numerous and long fragments, to be taken for what they are worth. That science has since then made a progress of which I could not remain ignorant; the proof of that will be found in several essays of a later date, of which I speak at the right time and place.

As I scarcely left Coppet during the latter half of the year, seeing but little company, and not having been separated from my family, I can find nothing either in my notes or in any private correspondence which is worthy of being set down here.

## III.

1824.

AFTER having languished through the latter half of August and the first half of September, the King died on the morning of the 13th. His death left all sensible people in a state of deep anxiety, and all good Royalists delighted at the prospect of the coming reign.

He was buried at Saint-Denis on the 23rd.

As soon as Louis XVIII. had passed away, Charles X. succeeded him.

On the 27th, he made his public entry into Paris.

His very first act was to grant to the Duc de Bourbon, to the Duc d'Orléans, and to their families, the title of 'Royal Highness,' which had been refused them during the last reign.

He pardoned thirty deserters who had been sentenced to death for having borne arms against France during the Spanish war, several individuals who had been condemned for conspiracy against the State, and he

promised to summon the Chambers to meet at an early date.

He abolished the censorship of the press, but kept the Ministry which had just established it in power.

The popular joy was very great, and the public acclamations were in proportion to the joy. This first day of his reign was destined to have, six years later, a last to-morrow, which only proved, as the former did, how easy it is to create popular enthusiasm, and how precarious it is when obtained.

Almost at the same moment an individual who, without lowering royalty, had a much stronger actual hold than Charles X. himself over the hearts and the imagination of a great nation, I mean M. de la Fayette, was also making his entry into Washington—an entry which, if less gorgeous, was much more like a triumph than that of the successor of Louis XVIII.

On January 12, 1824, the Senate and the House of Representatives of the United States had unanimously adopted the following resolution :

‘ Seeing that the distinguished champion of liberty and the hero of our resolution, the friend and companion of Washington, the Marquis de la Fayette, a voluntary general officer in our War of Independence, has expressed a strong desire to visit our country, to whose

independence he contributed his valour, his blood, and his wealth,

‘It is resolved that the President be requested to transmit to the Marquis de la Fayette the feelings of respect, gratitude, and affection which the American people and Government cherish towards him, and to assure him that the accomplishment of the desire and of the intention which he has of visiting this country will be welcomed with patriotic joy and pride.

‘Moreover, it is resolved that the President shall ascertain the period at which the Marquis de la Fayette will find it most convenient to pay his promised visit, and to offer him means of transport to this country on one of our national ships.’

In consequence of this invitation, the Marquis de la Fayette, for that was the title which the republicans of the United States gave him seriously and the French royalists in mockery—although the latter never failed to prefix that title to the names of M. de Chauvelin and of M. d’Argenson—embarked at Havre on July 13, on board the United States vessel, the *Cadmus*, and landed at New York on August 15, as ‘the guest of the nation,’ a title which was worth quite as much as the other.

The open-armed reception which awaited him in every

State, in every town, in every straggling village, was affectionate, cordial, and dazzlingly brilliant. It may be said, without any exaggeration, that from the shores of the Atlantic to the foot of the Alleghanies, from the mouth of the Saint-Lawrence to Saint-Louis, there was not a single hamlet in which his visit was not turned into a fête, whither the people did not flock together from hundreds of miles, in order to shake hands with him, where there was a shout, an acclamation, a toast or a speech which did not express sincere pleasure at the visit. Never did any man, whether a foreigner or a native, at any time, in any country, have such a reception from a whole nation, and never could such a reception be better deserved. After a tour of five months, interrupted by many excursions, M. de la Fayette was on his return to Washington, on December 5, received by Congress, and congratulated by the Presidents of the Senate and of the House of Representatives ; on December 20, a Bill drawn up in the following terms was passed in both Chambers, unanimously and by acclamation :

‘That it be decreed that the sum of two hundred thousand dollars (a million of francs) be paid to Major-General de la Fayette, as a reward for his important services, and as an indemnity for the expenses he was put to during the American revolution, and that a plot

of land sufficient to establish a whole parish be assigned from the unsold State lands, and that the deeds relating to this be handed to him by the President of the United States.'

M. de la Fayette returned to us enchanted and proud, than which nothing could be more natural. He had found that infant, whose cradle, whilst himself still a young man, and for some time alone in Europe, he had protected in spite of the French Government, grown up to be a giant. He had found that flag of a handful of rebels, which he had carried as a volunteer, himself almost a rebel for doing so, floating over the capital of a great country which already rivalled the mother country, and which is perhaps intended to have still higher destinies. He had seen a Republican Government, which had been the dream of all his life, firmly established, regular, conforming to reason, compatible with order, assuring unheard-of prosperity joined to unlimited liberty to its citizens. His canting coat-of-arms, a horse without a bridle, with this motto, *Cur non*, was very nearly becoming that of the United States. It certainly did not require so much as this to encourage his mind, which was in all enterprises the most self-confident and ardent which can possibly be conceived, in its unlimited hopes, and to urge him further and further

on his dangerous path. But if, on that day when he piously visited the tomb of him who had been his master and his model, at Mount Vernon, that tomb had opened at his voice; if the shade of Washington, the wisest of heroes and the most heroic of wise men, had risen from it to give him his hand and converse with him, what a large amount of salutary advice would he not have received from him! How different would their impressions of the moment, their presentiments as to the future of the United States, and of the example which they would give to the world, have been! The great mind of the great man would not have been mistaken. What we have all seen since, he would have foreseen through the dazzling light of the day and of the hour. Measuring with a sad and stern glance the already marked and ever-growing tendency to levelling, which destroys everything that it has raised up, which blames natural instead of social distinctions, and treats accident of talent like accident of birth; the already marked and ever-growing progress of that spirit of usurpation and of conquest which sows discord in neighbouring countries, in order to annex their territory; the already marked and ever-growing progress of that popular frenzy which holds the terror of lynch-law over all who resist the popular



ideas—measuring, I say, with one glance the fatal abyss towards which his country was allowing itself to glide, Washington would have foreseen and would have predicted the more or less near dissolution of a social body in which civic and civil bonds were getting more and more relaxed, in which patriotism, that only safeguard of Republican Governments, made way, more and more, for the spirit of greed and speculation. But that great friend of humanity, who liberated all his slaves on his death-bed, would not have foreseen what we are witnessing at present—the American confederation on the point of being dissolved, for the greater glory and greater extension of slavery, at the very moment when slavery is disappearing from the face of the civilized world, when even the Autocrat of all the Russias is himself about abolishing it in all his dominions.

Before long slavery will only exist in the country of Franklin.

*‘O vanas hominum mentes, O pectora cæca.’\**

We intended to go to Hofwyl, and I had a particular motive for returning there, which I will explain presently.

\* This was written in 1860, before the War of Secession and the abolition of slavery in the United States.—EDITOR'S NOTE.

We spent two consecutive days there, and my wife and I had, together and separately, very long interviews with M. de Fellenberg.

My first impressions remained the same. I even found, after five years, that the faults of the establishment and the powerlessness of the system were more striking than formerly. To speak the truth, it even seemed to me that the author of this system no longer entirely believed in it himself; that he was modifying it by degrees, without altogether allowing the fact; that he returned to the processes of the ordinary method, whilst he wrapped them up in odd names; that he was constantly engaging in new enterprises, in order to hide the want of success of the former, and by redoubling his partly sentimental, partly mystic interpretations, he affected a tinge of charlatanism of which he was himself the dupe.

My first and principal motive had been thoroughly to examine, for the second time, the establishment of M. de Fellenberg, and definitely to settle my ideas on this subject.

It was an act of foresight on my part. My son was not yet three years old; but as, at the time of my marriage, it had been agreed between Madame de Staël and me that my sons should be brought up as

Catholics and my daughters as Protestants, I foresaw a great deal of difficulty in this twofold education in different directions in the same household ; and the uncertainty of my mind about essentials in such matters added to the hold political preoccupations had on me, quite unfitted me for overcoming such difficulties. Thence had arisen the idea of placing my son from the age of nine to twelve—that is, up to the age of his making his first Communion—in the mixed establishment of M. de Fellenberg, who at that time was held in very high esteem, reserving the right to take him away then, and to put him in a public school in France. But this project was necessarily subservient to the degree of confidence with which M. de Fellenberg's establishment should inspire my wife and me ; and this fresh investigation not having been more favourable than the other, I was obliged to make use of the time which still remained to fit myself better for the duties I should have to perform.

My first care ought to have been, and in fact was :

(1) To ascertain carefully the points of difference which divided, and still, at this present time, divide, the Catholic communion from that branch of Protestantism which is called the Reformed branch. It then was, and still is, a moderate and modified form of Calvinism ; it

was the belief which my wife held, and that in which she was bringing up her daughters.

(2) To examine carefully how far the spirit of conciliation between the two communions might extend, and where it ought to stop, so as not to degenerate into confusion of terms or into indifference as regards essentials.

At that period I was in an eminently fit state of mind to be able to judge of this double question without any prejudices, and I had plenty of matter to enlighten me close at hand. The library at Coppet was rich in controversial works; they abounded in it, and I was living in the midst of a very ardent set of Protestants. In this school, if I cannot say that I became in a few months a learned theologian, I, at any rate, came near enough to it to be able to convince myself fully that all the chief points of division between the two communions, all those which when closely examined did not resolve themselves into a mere strife about words, into puerile arguments, had been laid down by Bossuet in his exposition of the Catholic doctrine with exactitude and sincerity, and that the explanations which he gave there, and which push concession to its furthest limits, and are as solid, in point of sense, and as vigorous, in point of logic, as the answers of his opponents seem to be wanting in those qualities.

I also learnt enough to understand that, the existence of a revealed religion being admitted on both sides, of a religion founded on Holy Writ, of a religion whose dogmas, miracles, mysteries, impose a certain amount of submission on human reason at every moment, the depository and the direction of such teaching could hardly remain subject to the fluctuations of the human intellect—that it required the constant intervention of a divinely constituted and divinely protected body, whose authority should be recognised by the assembly of the faithful—that by attributing on the other hand, like Protestantism does, an almost unlimited freedom of examination into matters of belief, to the faithful—by supposing that every believer had the mental capacity to pronounce according to his lights on all those questions which may arise as regards the authenticity and integrity of the Scriptures, the real or possible interpretation, and the literal or figurative sense of disputed texts, by laying the obligation on him of doing so—on the one hand it would be asking them or commanding them to do an impossibility, and, on the other, they would be forcibly placed either on the road leading to rationalism, if they yielded to the very natural temptation of making faith subservient to reason, or on that leading to individualism, if they

yielded to the still more natural temptation of making selections in the Bible, of admitting this, and cutting out that, according to their turn of mind ; or, lastly, on the abyss of fanaticism, if they yielded to the temptation which is certainly more rare, but still very common, to push certain principles to extremes, to the detriment of certain others.

Socinians, Independents, Anabaptists, or their like, are the extremes of Protestantism—extremes towards which every sect gravitates in turn, *absit injuria verbo*, every believer, on his own account, more or less, stopping sooner or later on the path, according to what amount of primitive Catholic faith he preserves ; for that faith constitutes always the starting-point and the turning-point.

Under the sway of these ideas, which struck me at the outset, and which study, reflection, and experience have only increased in me more and more, I not only persisted in having my son educated in the Catholic religion (this was not a point about which there was any question), but I conceived the hope of one day bringing back my wife, and through her my daughters, to it. It was a difficult enterprise, and one, besides, which was not ripe for execution. In order to convince others, one must be convinced one's self, and my mind

was still too much perplexed as regards the nature of things. Given the truth of the Christian religion, I did not hesitate to recognise the Catholic doctrine as the true one; but was the Christian religion itself true? I still did not dare to affirm this to myself.

I was, however, on the road leading to a solution.

In meditating on the consequences, I could hardly avoid considering the principles, and from one reflection to another I was led to recognise these facts :

(1) That natural theology, which, up till that time, had been my only religion, was not, strictly speaking, a religion, as every religion requires worship, and all worship, an indefectible series of personal relations between man and God, a ceaseless reciprocity of prayers, of benefits, and of acts of Divine grace : all of which seem to exclude, instead of suggesting, the idea of a general providence which governs the world, without acceptation of persons, by invariable laws.

(2) That, consequently, the data on which natural theology rests seem at best, as regards religion itself, rather like the corner-stone laid as foundation than like the finished building itself.

(3) If one examines these data closely, one finds in them as many, if not more, mysteries than in revealed

religion (by mysteries I mean incomprehensible matters, and even some which appear to be contradictory); so that if argument about mysteries sufficed against revealed religion, this same argument would, with like reason, break down natural theology, and, as a matter of course, all rational truths as well, thus leaving our mind in a state of perfect scepticism, which is contradiction itself, since it professes to deny what it affirms, and to affirm what it denies.

(4) That between the mysteries of natural and of revealed religion there seemed to exist a secret understanding, a certain affinity; that they seemed to correspond with, and to fit into, each other, almost as exactly as the torn edge of a leaf taken out of a book will fit into the part it is torn from; that, in a word, they seem mutually to presuppose each other.

(5) That, in short, the author, whoever he may have been, of Christian revelation, had certainly fathomed the human heart, in all its strange and contradictory qualities, to a depth which no human moralist ever reached.

It certainly did not require great powers of thought to suggest these ideas; and, when I think of it, I feel ashamed at having waited for nearly forty years before discovering what the least educated Christian learns,



when a child, from the lips of his pastor ; but such was still at my time the state of men's minds, and I was neither the most unbelieving nor the most thoughtless of my contemporaries.

From that moment I firmly made up my mind to engage more and more in the search after this set of truths, whatever might be afterwards the preoccupations of my public and private life. I kept my word to myself, and God rewarded me for it.

We left Coppet very early that year. During the last months of our stay there, M. Rocca, uncle and guardian of Madame de Staël's last son, entrusted his ward to our care to be brought up in our family, with our children, and we, in our turn, in order that he might be brought up under our own eyes, placed the boy in the care of M. Sturm, a young Genevese, who later on made himself a name as a mathematician, and was elected a member of the Institute, and died only a few years ago.

## IV.

1825.

THE opening of Parliament very soon brought us back to Paris. The new King kept his word. The Session was opened on December 23, in a most honied speech; the addresses in reply were voted almost unanimously, although the speech announced, in so many words, a Bill relative to an indemnity to be granted to the *émigrés* as a mark of the happy accession of the King, and referred indirectly to a Bill of Sacrilege as a New Year's gift.

We had not to wait long for either of those Bills; neither the *émigrés* nor the clergy were kept in suspense for any length of time. On January 3, the Bill concerning the indemnity to be granted to *émigrés* was introduced by M. de Villèle into the Chamber of Deputies, and that relative to sacrilege into our Chamber by M. de Peyronnet on the 4th.

Before devoting the attention which they deserve to these two master-strokes, I will just notice in passing:



(1) The first mention of a very sad trial, that of the innocent convicts of Martinique.

(2) The restoration of the Orleans appanage, about which I, to my great regret, felt obliged to make a few remarks which the Duke of Orleans did not take at all amiss.

(3) The final debate on a Bill which had been dragging on from Session to Session for the last three years, of which the object was to regulate the establishment of religious communities for women—a Liberal Bill, due allowance being made for the claims of the clergy and for the prejudices of their opponents—a Bill which was very properly amended by M. Simeon and M. Pasquier, and about which, in the actual state of public opinion and of business, I had not a single word to say.

I will examine the Bill relative to sacrilege, the debate on which, in our Chamber,\* preceded that on the Bill of indemnity in the Chamber of Deputies.

It was in a way the thermometer by which one could calculate the degree of subserviency on the part of the Ministry towards its party. The *congregation*, that bugbear of which people make fun now, after having been very frightened at it in its time—the *con-*

\* The French House of Peers, of which the Duc de Broglie was a member.

gregation—that is to say, the active and ardent section of the clergy—had their foot on the neck of M. de Villèle and his associates. The Premier\* had hoped, if not to satisfy them, at least to appease their hunger for some time, by serving them up a little impromptu repast—I mean to say a Bill which should treble and quadruple the penalties assigned to crimes and offences committed in churches and other places devoted to divine worship. But this was not at all what these good souls wanted. They were yearning for blood; they even wanted a little torture; above all and before everything, they were longing for some measure which would place State religion above all others until they could get something else: they wanted an Edict of Nantes until they could obtain the *dragonnade*.

I have already mentioned how our wretched Ministry, after having, as well as it could, carried its wretched Bill in our Chamber, had recoiled from the idea of laying it, as it was, before the Chamber of Deputies. The *tolle* was too strong in the latter. The cry of sacrilege was very nearly being raised against everyone who objected to the word and to the thing itself. Therefore, whilst drawing back, M. de Peyronnet put a good face on the matter. Just as the night which

\* M. de Villèle.

intervenes between to-day and to-morrow is said to bring sensible advice, so the interval between the two sessions brought about better counsels. When that year of repentance had come, the Members of the Cabinet came and boldly held out a Bill, headed with the following articles, which I transcribe here *ad perpetuam rei memoriam* :

‘ Art. 1.—The profanation of consecrated vessels and of the consecrated wafers constitutes the crime of sacrilege.

‘ Art. 2.—Every act of violence, committed voluntarily or out of contempt for religion, against the consecrated vessels or the consecrated wafers, constitutes profanation.

‘ Art. 3.—There is legal proof of the consecration of the wafers when they are placed in the tabernacle or in the monstrance, and when the priest administers the Holy Communion, or carries the viaticum to the sick.

‘ There is legal proof of the consecration of the ciborium, monstrance, patena, and of the chalices from the fact of their being used for religious ceremonies at the time the crime is committed.

‘ There is also legal proof of the consecration of the ciborium and of the monstrance from the fact of their

being enclosed in the tabernacle of the church, or in that of the sacristy.

‘Art. 4.—Death shall be the penalty for the profanation of consecrated vessels, when such profanation shall have been perpetrated under one of the two following circumstances :

‘(1.) If the consecrated vessels contained consecrated wafers at the moment the crime was committed.

‘(2.) If the profanation was committed in public.

‘Public profanation consists in its being committed in a public place, and in the presence of several people.

‘Art. 5.—The profanation of the consecrated vessels shall be punished with hard labour for life if it has been accompanied by either of the circumstances enumerated in the preceding article.

‘Art. 6.—Profanation of the consecrated wafers shall incur the same penalty as parricide. The execution shall be preceded by the public penance of the condemned criminal in front of the principal church of the place where the crime was committed, or of the place where the court of assizes was held.’

These words were not uttered in 1204 on the eve of the crusade urged by Pope Innocent III. against the Albigenses, nor in 1572, on the eve of the massacre of St. Bartholomew; but in the nineteenth

century, thirty-five years after 1789, in a free country, where liberty of worship is openly acknowledged, in the full glare of the tribune and of the press, in a capital in which twenty Protestant ministers paid by the State taught their flocks daily that the dogma of the Real Presence is idolatrous, that it was profanation and sacrilege to adore the consecrated wafer, and the ciborium and tabernacle which contain it. It was at a time and in a country like this—it was under sway of such views and of such a rule—that a phase of theological belief was once more entrusted to the keeping of the public executioner, and that error was incited to commit crimes by being offered the palm of martyrdom.

Such an undertaking was at the same time so horrible and so grotesque, that it was almost impossible to prevent oneself from shrugging one's shoulder at it, as much from feelings of disgust as of indignation.

By degrees, however, indignation gained the ascendant. The debate was sustained with much loftiness of expression and nobleness of feeling. M. Molé opened it in a speech which was thoroughly worthy of a statesman and a good man. M. de la Bourdonnaie even surpassed the mixture of ferocity and of folly which the Bill contained, by insisting that in

the ceremonies which anyone condemned to death as a parricide should have to undergo, a red veil should be substituted for the black veil over the head of the culprit. M. de Lally answered him, and he had a very good opportunity of doing so successfully ; but we had been so often wearied and deafened by his eloquence, which was half whimpering and half scolding, that we could only half applaud him, and even that nearly cost him dear.

At the very moment when, by an oratorical phrase which he had prepared long before, and when invoking the maxim *Ecclesia abhorret a sanguine* to his aid, he called upon the bench of bishops to thunder, as he was doing, against a law which must be abhorrent to everyone by its bitterness and blood-thirstiness, he was so sharply repulsed by Cardinal de Latil, and so rudely apostrophised by all the bench, that he lost the thread of his speech and his head at the same time. His stout face got as red as the cardinal's hat ; his burly stomach threatened to burst with the convulsive efforts he made to enforce attention ; they had to untie his cravat, to unbutton his waistcoat, and to carry him out into the open air. It was thought that he might have a fit of apoplexy, and this incident closed the sitting abruptly, and those who had interrupted it perhaps thought



they had offered a first victim to Moloch. Let me be accurate, however : there was in this more of party spirit, and perhaps of intimidation, than of real fanaticism. As a rule, our Cardinals and Archbishops were moderate men. The law of sacrilege did not originate with them ; they would have preferred something more humane and gentle, but they were watched and urged on by the fanatical clergy and laity, and did not dare to flinch before them.

The next day I resumed the debate under favourable circumstances, because four-fifths of the Chamber tacitly cursed what the other fifth openly imposed upon them ; and I did so successfully, because I was counted on to speak frankly, and because nothing succeeds so well as to tell people what they wish to hear.

I performed my task to the entire satisfaction of those who had implicitly entrusted me with it.

Without showing any more pity for the law than it did for the guilty, with one word I exposed its faults ; quickly setting aside everything which might seem to be a preamble, which smacked of tricks of speech, of oratorical precautions, I closed with the proposition, and I sifted it thoroughly.

‘What are you going to punish with death,’ I said, ‘in what you please to call sacrilege ? Is it an act of

disorder in a public place? For a mere act of disorder the penalty of parricide? Is it for the material act? It is the same in a Protestant Church as in a Catholic Chapel; whether it be an act of violence on a consecrated or an unconsecrated vessel. If the intention is wrong and profane, it is the same in both cases. No, indeed; it is only the want of belief in the doctrine of the Real Presence; in other words, that is the offence, that is the heresy.

‘Society is not menaced in any way; no crime is committed—there is no question of repressing it; for the first time after forty years, it is a question of elevating a dogma into a legal truth, and to hand over the business of avenging it to the secular arm.’

I then, rapidly and superficially, seeing that this point had been touched on by M. Molé, pointed out that the consequences of this principle would be not only evil, but fatal; blasphemy would follow sacrilege in the penal code, and the result would be the Inquisition.

After that I urged the amount of folly and of detestable hypocrisy which such a Bill must impose upon its authors.

‘What jurist is there who, when he looks at these words: . . . “Every act of violence, *committed voluntarily, or out of contempt for religion, against the conse-*

*crated vessels or the consecrated wafers . . .*" would not pity this bewildered Government, which has been carried away, and is wandering out of all regular tracks; which tries first to define a crime, then suddenly, trembling at its own work, and not daring to presume culpability in the act which it has just described, calls upon the jury to constitute itself into an inquisitor, and, in a manner, to receive the confession of the criminal before pronouncing his sentence; to absolve him or to condemn him, according to the state of his conscience, according to the direction of his thoughts, according to the aim which he set before himself when he committed the deed! And what aim can anyone who has committed an act of outrage against the consecrated wafers have set before himself, except to insult that which he ought to respect? If such an act appears to you to deserve the extreme penalty of the law, say so frankly, and do not give the culprit any loop-holes of escape; if, on the other hand, that act appears to you to be merely that of a despicable fool, have the courage to say so; have the courage to be just, humane, reasonable; do not disguise weakness under violence, and do not lay upon the jury a responsibility which the Legislature itself ought alone to bear.

‘Who is the sincere but enlightened Catholic, who,

when he comes to reflect on this inconceivable expression: "There is legal proof of the consecration of the wafers; there is legal proof of the consecration of the ciborium," would not feel disgusted at seeing an assembly in which Protestants have seats, called upon to decide, by means of a compromise and through subtle argumentation, as to what is and what is not sacred, as to the moment when the possibility of outraging God in the sanctuary begins or ends; at seeing us laymen, us profane persons, voting by remaining sitting or by standing up in our places, as to the period, the duration, the cessation of a miracle; at seeing us establishing legal presumptions, judicial presumptions as to what? Great God! I hardly dare to say it! Legal presumptions as to when there is Real Presence! What a scandal, what a real profanation! And who cannot see that such questions are of the competence of only an Œcumenical Council, or of a Holy Office appointed by the Holy See; but not of ours or of that of a jury!

‘ And what shall I say to you about the cutting off of the hand, about the mutilation, about that penalty which, for the first time since the publication of the penal code of 1810, we now see applied to a new crime? Who will henceforward require to be told that

this terrible butchery has not been introduced into our laws for parricide, nor to satisfy public morality, which has always repelled it with disgust ; that it was revived in honour of the plot against the person of the prince ; that it was a piece of cowardly flattery towards the head of the then existing Government, a mean compliment to that vanity of the *parvenu* which he never laid aside even on his triumphal chariot ; that it was a manner of persuading the people that his person was sacred and holy—that he was, as was at that time said, even from the pulpit, the anointed of the Lord and the elect of Providence ! Is that invention, which servility bethought itself of to reassure the fears and flatter the pride of a tyrant, is a worthy tribute to offer to the Creator of heaven and earth, to that ineffable Being from whom emanates all justice and all virtue !

Then, resuming the argument which had so nearly been fatal to M. de Lally—the argument drawn from the general character of the Church, from its purely moral and healing code, from its purely spiritual punishments : penance, exclusion from the sacraments, and excommunication—I wound up with this last reflection, which caused the whole Chamber to start :

‘ We are told that this Bill will be nothing but a mere monument of religion ; that as this crime is never

committed, the Bill will never be carried into effect. Either we are being deceived, gentlemen, or those who propose it are deceiving themselves.

‘ I allow that this crime is no longer committed ; but since when has it not been committed ? Since the time such laws have disappeared from our codes. As long as religion was, I will not say protected, but compromised by sanguinary laws, men were found to dare these laws ; if these sanguinary laws are revived now, the crime will revive with them.

‘ This is no accidental and passing coincidence. It is a necessary consequence and an inevitable result ; it is an observation which has its roots in the human heart, which history attests, and which experience proves.

‘ One cannot trifle with these ideas of extraordinary crimes and refined punishments with impunity, nor can one with impunity excite the disorders of corrupted minds with such objects.

‘ How does it happen that, when some extraordinary crime, strange in its details, tragic in its consequences, is suddenly committed somewhere, immediately, in spite of punishment, in spite of death, exactly similar crimes are repeated, and increase under the very hands and eyes of astounded justice ? How is it that a celebrated poisoner causes ten other similar cases to take place ;

that a fire, caused perhaps by chance some leagues away from the capital, is the cause of a whole number of other fires, which devastate the surrounding country, just as if the ferment going on in depraved minds were only waiting for a signal—as if criminal passions, wavering in their purpose, were only waiting for some example in order to make up their minds?

‘Such is the state of the human heart; every magistrate will testify to this. I may call on the Keeper of the Seals himself as a witness.

‘Well, nobody thinks of the crime which is being denounced with so much noise nowadays. But who can say what may be the effect of that imprudent Bill which is thrown open to public curiosity and to public discussion, which latter is a hundred times more dangerous than the Bill itself?

‘Have no doubt about the matter; there is danger, and a real danger which is so much the greater because the ideas which this Bill awakens appeal at the same time to what is most lofty and what is most impure in the hearts of men; because it evokes at the same time religious exaltation and impious fury.

‘At present, under a government which leaves religious worship free, under the sway of gentle and humane laws, what is the profanation of the con-

secrated wafers? A piece of abject turpitude, cowardice, ignominy. There does not exist a being who is so degraded in his own eyes as not to blush at the idea of lowering himself to that degree.

‘But you have erected that act into a profession of faith against the dogma of the Catholic religion: many enthusiasts will be found to commit it; when you have ennobled it by martyrdom, fanatics will be found who are eager to suffer it. Incredulity itself, in case of need, will have its adherents; because, and this is a remarkable thing, it has never lacked them anywhere where persecution has declared itself.

‘In default of one or the other, depravity, debauchery, a worn-out imagination, will all seek, even in dangers themselves, those emotions which they crave for.

‘I say it with profound conviction; if the Bill does not pass here, if it disappears before having the further publicity of debate in the other House, the past will be answerable to us for the future. No profanation, with profanation as its only object, has been committed for a quarter of a century, and there will be none in the future.

‘But if, to our misfortune, this Bill should be carried in debate, if the ideas which are attached to it should be hurled from the tribune into all the corners of the



kingdom, should be transplanted from place to place, and propagated amongst the lowest classes of society, perhaps, before a year has elapsed, perhaps before we meet again within these walls, the provisions of the Bill may have been carried into effect, and may Heaven grant that they may not have been so in several places! At this moment, no example can be cited to prove to us that they are useful, but examples will not be wanting to prove to us that they are not even sufficient. Blood will have been shed. A hideous spectacle, abominable, unworthy of a Christian and civilized nation, will have been offered to the populace in order to harden and corrupt it. This will doubtless be a great evil, but it will not be the greatest of all. The Bill itself will have incited to crime before punishing it. The Bill will have created the culprit before striking him. This, I think, is enough both to justify the horror with which it inspires me, and the impatience which I show for its rejection.'

Alas! I was a prophet, or very nearly so.

Ten months later, December 16, 1825, a released convict, Pierre Baillit, who had already been sentenced to ten years in irons, was condemned to death by the Court of Assizes of Cantal for stealing a ciborium containing consecrated wafers, or which were legally presumed to be such, as the ciborium was enclosed in the

tabernacle. As a matter of fact, the question of intention being brought to bear at the same time on the theft and on the sacrilege, and as the man was convicted for the repetition of a similar offence, it may be doubted whether this was a pure and simple application of the new law.

Before passing, the Bill itself ran great risks. The debate having been prolonged till February 16, and as nearly all the great speakers in the Chamber, and nearly all the lawyers of reputation, seeing the breach opened—Lanjuinais, Bastard, Pontécoulant, M. de Chateaubriand himself—spoke more or less vehemently on the side of reason and humanity, the dispositions which carried the penalty of death, and which, in fact, formed the whole strength and life of the matter, were only adopted by a majority of four votes in a House of two hundred and sixteen, and these would have been more than counter-balanced if five of our side had been present at the time when the division took place. Lanjuinais, one of the five, was very grieved at this ; and the victory was only a small one for the opposite party, although it had cast all pretence aside, and had pushed its imprecations even to the last extremities.

M. de Bonald is held, and not without good reason,

to have been the leader of the supporters of this disgraceful Bill. It was he, in fact, who uttered these ever sadly memorable words :

‘People exclaim against the penalty of death ; let us venture here to proclaim strong truths ; if good men owe their life to society as a duty, bad men owe it as an example . . . . Sacrilege, it is said, is no crime ; it is a sin that religion alone ought to punish. But the decalogue, a reproduction of which is to be found in the criminal legislation of all nations, was surely given as a rule for society as well as for individuals. Murder, adultery, theft have not ceased to be crimes because they are sins. A speaker remarked that religion ordered men to pardon ; yes, but it ordered at the same time the powers that be to punish, for the Apostle says they do not bear the sword in vain. Our Saviour prayed for pardon for His murderers, but His Father did not grant His request. He even extended the chastisement to a whole nation, which without a head, without a country, without an altar, drags about with it everywhere the curse which has been uttered against it. As to a sacrilegious criminal, you are doing nothing but sending him before his natural judge.’

This terrible line of argument—which provoked the crushing reply of M. Pasquier : ‘Thus Simon de Montfort

spoke, when he encouraged his soldiers to massacre the Albigenes: "Kill them all," he cried; "God will recognise His own!"—this terrible argument, I say, excited such an amount of indignation in the Chamber that M. de Bonald, although he was M. de Bonald, thought it better not to let the sentence appear in his printed speech. He did even more, for one must do him justice: he proposed to substitute a mere open penance for the penalty of parricide. That was so much gained, but we had hoped for and almost obtained more.

In this state, and being thus deprived of its chief ornament, the Bill was brought down to the Chamber of Deputies on March 17. M. Peyronnet made them notice that the Bill was in a measure their own work, and that it was impatiently looked for, as a necessary expiation after so many years of indifference and of impiety.

It certainly was quite safe in such hands. Nevertheless, small though the minority was, the Bill encountered formidable opposition by the talent and by the very force of the cause itself. M. Royer-Collard was its mighty mouthpiece. He did us the honour to call our debate in the Chamber of Peers admirable. He deserved that praise more than any of us.

After the lapse of so many years, I cannot recall these simple and weighty words, which were spoken openly

from the tribune, without experiencing the same emotion as when they were first spoken :

‘ The question at issue is the crime of sacrilege.

‘ What is sacrilege ? According to the Bill, it is the profanation of the consecrated vessels and wafers. What is profanation ? It is every act committed in contempt and through hatred of religion. There the legal definitions stop ; the law did not wish, did not dare, to push them further ; but it ought to have gone on. What are consecrated wafers ? We Catholics believe we know by faith that the consecrated wafers are no longer the wafers which we see, but are the Lord Jesus Christ, the Saint of saints, God and man, invisible and present in the most august of our mysteries. Thus the crime is committed against our Lord Jesus Christ Himself. The irreverence of such language is shocking, for religion also has its modesty ; but it is the irreverence of the law. Sacrilege, therefore, consists, and the Bill bears me out, in an act of violence committed against our Lord.

‘ By substituting Jesus Christ, the Son of God, very God, for the consecrated wafers, I only wished to establish by the irrefutable testimony of the Bill, on the one hand, that the crime which it punishes under the name of sacrilege is a direct outrage against the Divine Majesty, that it constitutes, so to speak, the

crime of high treason against the Deity ; and, on the other hand, that this crime springs entirely from the Catholic dogma of the Real Presence, so much so, that if your mind separates the real presence of Jesus Christ and of His Divinity from the wafers, the sacrilege, with its concomitant penalties, disappears. It is the dogma which creates, it is the dogma which qualifies, the crime.'

I was struck at the same time by the boldness and the vigour of this language, and rather reassured in my conscience when I heard a man of such authority professing collectively such a belief, which, up till then at least, I had known was not the rule of his life personally. I was in the same position. I had said like him, 'We Catholics believe that the consecrated wafers are God Himself.' His example quieted me. Were both of us wrong? I am rather inclined to believe so.

M. Royer-Collard's whole speech answered to this opening. The peroration was not less bold :

'There are times when the penal laws, as regards religion, make men's minds ferocious ; Montesquieu says so, and the history of the last century bears him out. We can judge that there are other times when the result of these same laws is nothing but degrading corruption. Remember, gentlemen, the old age of the

great King and those days which followed it—those days which touch so closely upon the Revolution. Consult the most pious, the wisest contemporary writers about that period. Fénelon wrote these very words, March 15, 1712, three years before the death of Louis XIV.: “The existing morals of the nation throw everyone into the greatest temptation to attach himself to the strongest by any sort of meanness, of cowardice, and of treason.”’

This was literally like spitting in the face of his opponents.

The Bishop of Hermopolis, then Minister of Divine Worship, tried to answer Royer-Collard. His speech, over which he had evidently taken much trouble, was as weak as his cause, commonplace as his mind, moderate as his character. Almost at the same time, his brethren of the episcopacy, constantly worried by the adage, *Ecclesia abhorret a sanguine*, which was being constantly hurled at its head, published a sort of rather sophistical declaration, in which they tried to establish a distinction between taking part in a sentence of death and taking part in the drawing up of a bill which inflicted the death penalty. *Valeat quantum*.

The debate was prolonged from April 12 to April 16, and the Bill was only carried by a majority of 115 votes out of 305 members. . .

The minority, therefore, was raised to 95, in a Chamber where the Opposition, at its beginning, only counted 17 adherents. It will be seen how great our progress already was. The decline of our opponents dated from that day.

During that interval we discussed a Bill on piracy.

It was a subject on which I had already thought a great deal, but without as yet having fully made up my mind. I ventured to say a few words about it during the course of the debate, but not very successfully, and Benjamin Constant, who took up my argument in the Chamber of Deputies, was not more fortunate than I was; but we seized the occasion of speaking openly about the slave-trade, a sort of piracy sanctioned by the English laws, and about the maritime enterprises of the Greeks, to which it was wished to apply that epithet.

Since then, I got a short article *ex professo* inserted in the first number of the *Revue Française* on this matter, an article which I think is, for the first time, consistent with true principles, and altogether original; at least, I do not remember having met with any of its essential features in any law-books which ever came under my notice.

Then came, lastly, the Bill of indemnity.

Having been introduced, as I said above, on January 3,



it had been, on February 11, the object of a report confided to one of the best lawyers in the Chamber and in France. The debate began on the 17th, and occupied the Chamber, and pre-occupied the public, till March 15 ; that is to say, for nearly a month. Nothing can give an adequate idea of the tumult that reigned during these consecutive sittings. The first proposal, after it had been squeezed dry and remodelled from head to foot, was sent up to us March 16.

The Ministry had introduced the Bill in the name of public order : to put a stop to the recollection of civil discords, and to check the discredit which still weighed, under the name of ' national property,' on all the estates that had been confiscated under the revolutionary laws. The Chamber of Deputies had changed its character, and had insisted on inserting in the Bill principles which, on the contrary, seemed to me calculated to revive all the old resentments, and again to divide society into two classes of hostile and irreconcilable citizens.

I opposed the Bill from this point of view in a speech which had some effect.

Three important events happened towards the close of the year 1825.

The first was the interference of the Government of

the Netherlands in the internal affairs of the Catholic religion in Belgium, the foundation of the philosophical college at Louvain, and the beginning of the persecutions aimed at my poor uncle, the Bishop of Ghent, who had escaped from the claws of the Emperor Napoleon only to fall into those of King William—to pass from the prison of Vincennes to the pillory of Brussels.\*

I shall revert to this at the proper time and place.

The second was the death of General Foy. He was taken from us on November 28, after a long and painful illness. It is enough to mention him, as I have often spoken of him. His brilliant military qualities—and no one united higher or more varied qualities in himself—were nothing beside those which he so rapidly developed during his too short political career; the generosity of his character, the elevation and the activity of his mind, the brilliancy of his language, made him a unique specimen of a man with the amiable faults of a child; he was honoured by his opponents for his loyalty, and cherished by his friends for his fidelity to their colours. His death was a cause of

\* There is a mistake in the date here. The Bishop of Ghent was banished from his diocese in 1821, and that same year he died in Paris.

public grief; all the distinguished men of every party crowded to his funeral; the country and the army in a manner adopted his family by liberally providing for his children. A subscription of a million francs was filled in a very short time, and the larger part of the sum was contributed by the mite of the soldier or of the peasant, and not by the bank-notes of wealthy people.

Lastly, the third event was the premature death of the Emperor Alexander. He had entered on his forty-ninth year; although he had been for a long time the prey to mental agitations and strange depressions, his health did not appear to suffer under them, and the blow was unexpected. His death did not leave a void which was proportioned to the part he had played in Europe for twenty years. He always had to be reckoned with, because he could dispose of sixty thousand men; but he was scarcely reckoned upon, because he hardly knew what he wanted himself, and still less what he might want. The fickleness of his mind, the versatility of his ideas, the ease with which he had allowed himself in succession to be turned from black to white, and from white to black—at Tilsit by the Emperor, at Troppau by M. de Metternich, and at Paris by M. de la Fayette, and now

by Madame de Krudener—had altogether made him the *bête noire* of Liberals, and the Cassandra of diplomatists. I do not believe in the reports of poisoning to which his sudden demise was attributed. M. de Montalembert, the father of the one whom all the world knows, said to us one day from the tribune: ‘If the Emperor of Russia died by some means or other . . .’ I do not believe that the Emperor Alexander died by *the other* means which are usual in his country, and about which he knew something; but I should not be surprised if the fact of his having, at the Congress of Laibach, abandoned the poor Greeks, whom he had excited to revolt for twenty years, had aggravated the malady which carried him off. As I did not know him personally, and expected nothing good of him, I did not regret him; yet, as a Frenchman, I must allow that at the bottom of his heart he loved France and had rendered her real services in 1814 and 1815; as a man, I must allow that, amongst all absolute sovereigns, he is one of those who have oftenest put the question of good and bad to themselves.

I knew nothing of the troubles which preceded or marked the accession of Nicholas I., except from the newspapers of the period and from writings published since.

## V.

1826.

THE occupations and pre-occupations which are inseparable from a new establishment kept us at Broglie till the end of 1825, and a little later. The opening of the Session had been fixed for January 31, 1826.

The necessary preliminaries had no significance. There were no elections to verify, and scarcely any debates on the addresses.

On February 15, the decision which had been taken respecting Ouvrard's contracts was referred to our Chamber.

I have spoken already about these contracts, which were subscribed at the beginning of the Spanish expedition, and of the great services which they rendered to the army and to the monarchy itself.

Those contracts having been referred in 1824 to a Select Commission, were vehemently attacked in 1825 by the Right in the debate on the Bill of Accounts in the Chamber of Deputies, and also—although that was quite

out of place—by the Left, the Ministry, whose internal divisions and want of forethought those contracts disclosed, thought fit to decline the responsibility for them by demanding a legal inquiry ; but the royal tribunal of Paris, finding the name of the Dauphin and of Generals Guilleminot and Bordesoulle mixed up in the affair, declared itself incompetent to try it ; it became therefore necessary to come to us, and thus to allow the political character of the question to be paraded openly before all the world.

I will explain presently what happened.

On February 20, at the proposal of one of its members, M. de Salaberry, the Chamber of Deputies made the editor of the *Journal du Commerce* appear at the bar. It was an Opposition newspaper ; several members of the Left had joined in starting it, amongst others M. Casimir Perier. This was the first time that this Chamber, in the real or supposed interests of its dignity, made use of the privilege which the last press law had assigned to it.

The debate was lively. M. Royer-Collard took part in it ; his speech was sharp and very incisive. I will leave this short extract from it to speak for itself :

‘ The incriminated article alludes to two facts : the one, that there are many *émigrés* in this Chamber ; the

other, that there are many officials. These two facts are matters of public notoriety ; the *émigrés* are proud of having been so, and I fancy the officials are quite willing to consent to be so.

‘ But because there are many *émigrés* in the Chamber, the journalist draws the conclusion that the indemnity for them has been voted in their personal interest, and that the Chamber is taking courtiers under its protection ; because there are many officials in the Chamber, the journalist concludes that the authority of the Chamber is very much weakened, and that, above all things, it protects public clerks. Each of these conclusions is rash, false, and is wanting in respect towards the Chamber ; I will even go so far as to say that these conclusions are insulting, provided that it be allowed that the insult is not gratuitous, and that it springs more from an error of judgment than from malice, or a perverse desire to libel the Chamber.

‘ Personally, I believe that the *émigrés* who have seats in this Chamber were induced to vote for the indemnity by considerations which were far higher than their own personal interests ; I am glad to think so ; neither reason nor ethics can force me to do so. And so I also believe that the officials who have seats here bring into, and preserve in this Chamber their own

perfect individual liberty ; but I am neither obliged to believe it or to say it, and if I say or believe the contrary, I am much less to be blamed than the Ministry which has so solemnly and so often proclaimed that they own the votes of public functionaries, and that the latter are irrevocably bound to them. On this part of the indictment, the Ministers must certainly be the defendants before the journalist, because Ministerial—and certainly not passive but active doctrines, where the precept is often confirmed by the example—have led him astray.

‘Common prudence, that prudence which is as old as the human race itself, teaches us that the particular situation of every man determines his own particular interests, and that only too often it may be expected that men’s interests determine their actions. Where the opposite exists, there must exist also a large amount of virtue ; for that alone can work such a miracle. I say it openly ; I say it with the authority of general experience : the *émigrés* had need of a large amount of virtue in order to throw aside their own personal interest in the vote of indemnity ; public officials in the Chamber require all their virtue in order to remain independent ; where is now the offence of the journalist ? Solely in having judged the Chamber as it would commonly be judged, as



common prudence or history would judge it ; in having sought and found the spirit which inspires it, rather in the ordinary laws of the human heart than in the extraordinary laws of virtue. I could understand this accusation if silence were the law of the country, but where free speech is the ordinary rule, where everyone has the right to say what he has the right to think, the crime seems to me to be nothing more than an error, a more or less grave mistake which may be censured but not punished. I ask you, gentlemen, to what depth of servility must not have sunk a people which, being called upon to give its opinion, should always feel obliged to find virtue in the utterances of its Government.

The editor was sentenced to pay a fine of a hundred francs, and to be kept in prison for one month.

The first Bill which was introduced to us was a very simple and sensible one ; it was a question of regulating the administration of penal justice amongst Frenchmen in the same way as it is exercised in the Levant by our Consuls, conformably to the terms of the capitulations in force between France and the Porte.

M. Lainé and M. de Chateaubriand tried to make this Bill as little political as possible, by tacking an amendment on to it, against what they called white slavery. They alleged, rightly or wrongly, that certain French

privateers had placed their ships at the disposal of Mehemet Ali, who had used them to transport, from Greece into Asia, some poor Greek families who had been reduced to slavery by the rigours of the war. The amendment imposed the obligation on our Consuls of carefully seeing that no Frenchman should engage in any transaction bearing on the slave trade on Ottoman territory. No doubt the intention was excellent, but its execution was impossible, at least by these means. It would have been a case of tearing up with our own hands our own stipulations, if we had authorized our Consuls to interfere in transactions between Turks on Ottoman territory, under the pretext that a Frenchman might be implicated. The jurisdiction of our Consuls in the East, exceptional and conventional as it is, could not be extended by the consent of only one of the high contracting powers to extra-national acts.

I would not allow myself to be dragged on to fighting on this ground, however great the interest which I felt in the Greeks. I thought it was essential to the small amount of credit which I possessed in the Chamber to which I belonged to act like a sensible man, like a man who knows what he is doing, and like one who does not court popularity right and left.

I kept quiet; the amendment was carried, and the Bill was withdrawn.

For the same reasons I took no part in the very violent debates which were carried on in the two Chambers on a much more difficult subject, but in which the Government, as I thought, was quite in the right. As it did not require my assistance, I had no reason to offer it.

The question was that of the recognition of Hayti, and of the indemnity which, by this transaction, was stipulated for the profit of the colonists.

The Bill which was to settle the way in which this indemnity was to be paid was introduced into the Chamber of Deputies on February 11 of the same year, and after having been submitted to one of our most eminent lawyers, M. Pardessus, was carried on March 20. It was introduced the very next day into our House, where it raised several apparently very delicate questions.

Had the Government acted wisely in renouncing its eventual rights over our former colony?

Could it do so without the concurrence of the Legislature?

Do colonies form an integral part of French territory?  
Is it worthy of a King to treat with revolted slaves?  
In any case, was the indemnity sufficient?

Lastly, supposing it to be carried, would it not be right to reduce the debts of the ejected colonists in proportion to the indemnity which they were to receive ?

As far as I was concerned, I repeat it, I did not hesitate. I looked upon every hope of ever recovering simply San-Domingo, and of re-establishing slavery there, as a piece of hateful folly. I thought that, in treating with a republic of mulattoes and negroes, the Government had honourably raised itself above party prejudices; that the right to cede, in case of necessity, any portion of our territory did not exceed the limits of the royal prerogative; that an indemnity of a hundred and fifty millions of francs was too heavy for the poor devils who undertook to pay it; that this treasure trove, this deodand which fell to the colonists from the clouds, could not in any way allow them to imagine that they were authorized to think themselves free from their debts; that if the Government wronged them in obtaining for them something sure instead of empty promises, it was for the Government, and not for their creditors, to indemnify them for it.

I should certainly have defended the Bill, provided it had required any support; but, seeing that it could not fail to be carried, I must confess that I took a certain malicious pleasure in seeing our Ministry torn to pieces.

by its own adherents, its majority dismembered by degrees, and in seeing it also increase, much to its own detriment, the small party which we called *la défection*, and which, when occasion offered, voted with us, though with reluctance.

However, the real field of battle soon opened to everyone.

On February 10, M. Peyronnet laid on the table of our House a Bill drawn up in these terms :

‘ Art. 1.—In all cases relating to estates bequeathed to direct descendants, and on which the aggregate land-taxes shall amount to at least three hundred francs, and in which the testator shall not have disposed of the disposable part, the first-born of the male heirs of the deceased testator shall be legally entitled to such part, beside his legal portion.

‘ In case the testator shall have disposed of a portion of the disposable part, the legal extra share of the first-born of the male heirs shall be composed of the remaining portion of such part.

‘ The legal extra share (*préciput légal*) shall be raised on the real property left by the deceased, and should such property be found insufficient to make up that extra legal portion, the latter shall be completed from out of the personalty of the deceased.

‘Art. 2.—The provisions of the two first paragraphs of the foregoing article shall not apply in all cases in which the deceased shall have expressed, either by deed of gift or by will, his formal desire not to see them enforced.

‘Art. 3.—The property of which one may freely dispose, in accordance with Articles 915 and 916 of the Code Civil, may be given as a whole or in part, by deed of gift or by will, under the condition that the receiver or legatee shall return such property to one or several of the children or direct descendants of the donor, born or to be born, as far as the second degree of descent inclusive.

‘Articles 1051 and following of the Code Civil, as far as Article 1074 inclusive, shall rule the execution of the preceding clause.’

Such a Bill was a defiance.

It was in a measure a challenge, which was presented at the sword's point by the counter-revolution to the Revolution, by the old *régime* to the new one. To attack the spirit of equality which was our pet, our idol, in the very interior of family life, to resuscitate the right of primogeniture by arming it, so that it might be able to perpetuate itself, with the right of substitution, was a double enterprise the principles of which were only

equalled in rashness by the feebleness of its means of execution.

It caused a tremendous scandal and universal excitement. It spread over the whole of France like a train of gunpowder, and the result of this outcry was that there was not a boy, born of a good mother, whether the elder or the younger son, who did not make it a point of honour to throw a stone at the ghost of the past, and there was not a scribbler who did not have a fling at it.

The Ministry itself entered this defile with fear, and the best of its adherents only followed it there reluctantly. But what was to be done? Some sign of life must be given. In order to maintain their position amongst the nobility of the Chamber and the petty gentry of the country, it was necessary every Session to strike some telling blow, and perhaps, after all, there was some honesty on the part of M. de Villèle when, amongst the exigencies of his position, he chose that one which was more a cause of alarm than of harm.

However that may be, we did not thank him for it, and we prepared to profit by our advantage without mercy or pity. In order to do so, we entered indirectly, and without any stir, into a coalition with the

remnants of the Richelieu Ministry, who had become the chiefs of the Right Centre in our Chamber. These statesmen (we will not contest their right to that title) were not, indeed, such decided adversaries as we were of the right of primogeniture and of the right of substitution ; on the contrary, I rather think that they would have willingly accepted it, had they seen any way of doing so ; but they were too sensible not to understand the signs of the times, and too eager to replace their predecessors, to allow a good occasion to escape them.

We therefore came to an understanding with them from the very first words we exchanged ; and when the day of the debate came, M. Molé, M. de Barante, the Duc de Choiseul, Lanjuinais, Cornudet, on our side, and M. Pasquier, M. Roy, M. Siméon, on that of our allies, were seen mounting the breach with equal ardour ; even M. Lainé, though he did so somewhat timidly, fired his little shot at the Government.

According to my custom, I had taken my turn to speak last, thus leaving the field free for the most apparent and striking arguments, and for those which were most in vogue, and reserving for myself, in my inner consciousness, without suggesting them to anybody, those which appeared to me to be the most



decisive, the most likely to give, in the form of substantial help, what would prove at the same time the finishing stroke.

By inserting here several fragments of the speech which I delivered during the sitting of April 4, I shall give some idea of the progress of the debate, of its different variations, and of the state in which I found it.

After having made a humble excuse for speaking so late in the debate, and for again having to take up the attention of the House, which must necessarily be already exhausted by the duration of a debate which had already lasted several days, I said: 'Do not think that I am ruled in this matter by any paltry feelings of self-love, or that I am afraid of venturing again on beaten tracks, and of reproducing, doubtless in a less happy form, arguments with which you are already familiar. . . . my embarrassment comes from another source than that: it is the Bill itself that baffles me the more I study it the less I know how to qualify it; the longer our debates are, the more doubt I feel as to the nature of the objections which may be employed to show, I will never, please God, say the folly of it, but its want of justification.

'In fact, gentlemen, when I look closely into this Bill itself, into its objects and principles, putting aside

all the accessory conditions which urge the Government to lay it before us, also putting aside the chances of success which it possesses in the provisions it contains, I am not going too far in saying that I am horrified by it. According to my views, no tongue can furnish terms strong enough to express the enormity of such an enterprise. It is a question of no less a matter than of working a complete revolution in the State, by means of another revolution in men's dominant ideas, and by a complete reform in morals. Yes, gentlemen, I insist upon this; the man who, whilst hoping something for himself from this Bill, hopes more than that, or less than that, that man, I say, were he the author of that Bill himself, does not thoroughly understand it, or intends to leave it alone and to disavow it. On the other hand, when, descending from such lofty speculations, I review in my mind the motives which induce the Government thus to rush without looking ahead into a boundless ocean, these motives appear to me to be so vain, so futile, so wanting even in the shadow of any foundation, that I require all my confidence in the sincerity of the defenders of the Bill in order to enable me to believe that they really care for it themselves. But if, looking deeper into the matter, I consider the practical side

of this Bill, its chief provisions—in a word, the means by which it will or will not be anything but a sheet of white paper stained with black—why then my surprise is unmeasurable; I can scarcely persuade myself to take the matter seriously; I wonder, in spite of myself, whether it is really a fact, so wretched do the means of carrying it out seem to me, so evident does it appear to me that their only effect, provided they will have any, would be to increase, to hasten, to aggravate the real or supposed evil which Ministers say it is its object to remedy.

‘But, gentlemen, the remarkable point in this, and that which deserves serious attention, is that it is precisely the strange discrepancy which I am noticing here between the very principles of the Bill and the manner in which it is to be carried out, between the vastness of the enterprise and the small amount of trouble which is being taken to bring it to a successful issue, which seems likely to secure a majority for it in this Chamber.

‘You must take care. On our benches there are many serious and many learned persons who have the principles of that Bill at heart, who admire them, whether as a matter of reminiscence or of theory. These cannot fail to see that the Bill is paltry, weak, ridicu-

lous. And when such complaints are heard, what is the answer? The Government limit themselves to saying, as the Minister of Finance did yesterday, that they could not venture to go any further, that they could not run counter to popular prejudices, or, better still, to insinuating gently, as the Minister of Marine did the day before that, that it is, at any rate, a step gained, and that political laws can only prepare the ground for the future. Then, all at once, they divert men's attention, and try to lead them astray, by talking of building up families, of consolidating families, by celebrating, in terms full of pomp and magnificence, all the wonders which that principle, by its mere appearance, is going to disseminate broadcast in society.

‘On the other hand, there are also, in this Chamber, men to be met who detest this same principle, who look upon it as unrighteous, odious, altogether perverting. When these give vent to their indignation at seeing it brought up again, they receive a very different answer; they are told: “Good heavens! what a bother about a trifle! What are we doing after all? Will not the whole matter be voluntary? Do you reckon the resistance of manners and customs for nothing?”

‘Thus some are asked to close there eyes to the vicious-

ness of the manner in which the provisions of the Bill are to be carried out, in consideration of the importance of its principles, whilst others are requested to condemn the principle in consideration of the want of energy shown in the provisions relating to its execution.

‘The importance of the principle which is to regenerate manners is vaunted to the latter, and the purity of the manners which will disarm the principle is vaunted to the former.

‘Now, gentlemen, you are in possession of the secret of all my perplexities. I should like to assail the Bill, but I do not know how to set about it; I do not know how to avoid, in spite of my dislike, entering on one or other branch of the system which has been laid down so as to secure for this Bill a safe passage through our Chamber.

‘If I assail the principle in all its details, if I depict it as it appears to my eyes—unjust, fatal, pernicious—I fear that I shall convince those who do not share my feelings that, after all, the Bill is, in a measure, efficacious, since such great results are looked for from it.

‘And if I limit myself to proving that the means of execution are nil and without effect, I fear that I may wrongly pacify the opponents of the principle; I fear

lest I should encourage them in allowing it to die a natural death, rather than to prevent its becoming law.

‘What is to be done, however? As far as I am concerned, I know of no other remedy than to explain one’s self clearly, to denounce boldly the sophistry of the supporters of the Bill, and to advise everybody to keep well upon his guard.

‘The principle of the Bill is either bad or good.

‘If it is good, and if men’s intentions are good, this Bill must be thrown out; for its provisions contain nothing, absolutely nothing, to ensure two minutes of existence to the principle.

‘If it is bad, the Bill must be thrown out, because of the principle itself, and we must not be foolish enough first of all to swallow poison in the hope that afterwards some antidote may be found to counteract its effect.’

When I had said this, I fully began to discuss the matter; I first of all proved by arguments drawn from political economy, with the rudiments of which the authors of the Bill seemed to be quite unacquainted, that the Bill would remedy none of the evils which served as a pretext for those who defended it; that its provisions would be powerless to prevent the division of landed property, the parcelling out of which was so feared, and that they would, on the other hand, have the

effect of increasing the evils of this division, by taking away from agriculture the capital which had been created by commercial industry. I stopped after this first part of my speech, which had not taken less than two hours.

I left the tribune for a few moments in order to regain my breath. I had already spoken for nearly two hours, during the whole of which time the Chamber had not ceased to follow me with kind attention, as if it were struck by the novelty, the abundance and the variety of the arguments which I laid before it. Our opponents were in a state of consternation ; on the Ministerial bench the agitation was great, and at every moment reinforcements were sent for ; message after message was despatched to M. de Corbière, who was the only one who did not respond to the appeal ; all the rest had already contributed their share, and exhausted their eloquence. I naturally did not wait for him ; in such a matter, above all, it is necessary to strike whilst the iron is hot.

When I again ascended the tribune, I discussed the principle of primogeniture itself, and I exposed all the injustice of it.

‘This will be my answer,’ I said, as I was finishing my speech, ‘to orators whose views I honour, but

whose chimeras I do not respect ; and to other orators who, being dazzled and, as it were, enchanted by the example of a neighbouring country, are, at this moment, dreaming of the possibility of establishing in France, not a nobility of the Court or of the provinces, but a real aristocracy, a free and proud aristocracy, which shall be powerful and majestic, and the enlightened protectress of popular liberties.

‘ The times for this are passed. For the future all classes of the French nation are equally emancipated. Whatever pressure be put on the nation, it will no longer produce servants and masters, but only magistrates and citizens. I will leave everyone to decide for himself, according to his own point of view, whether this be good or bad ; as for myself, I am proud of it, and I thank Heaven for it. There are, besides, some things which cannot be done either out of hand, or when the circumstances that called them to life no longer exist.

‘ Of course, I know that the right of primogeniture exists in England ; it exists there in a form which is a hundred times harder and more unjust than in the Bill now laid before us : all real property, without exception, goes to the eldest son. The only resource which the younger sons have is in a Church which is prodigiously, even scandalously rich ; in the army, where promo-



tion can be bought and sold ; in sinecures, which are without number and without limit ; in a heap of lucrative posts in the Colonies ; in India, where for such a length of time fifty millions of human beings have been given up to be devoured by the rapacity of their exactors. Yes, I know that the distinction of ranks has been preserved in England with a punctilious and pedantic precision for several centuries ; the government there belongs almost exclusively to a small number of great families, which, ranged as they are under different flags, fight for power amongst themselves, and hand it over to each other according to which way the prevailing wind of public opinion blows. All the details of the national administration devolve on a large number of noblemen, who, under the name of justices of the peace or of grand juries, decide everything, gratuitously, I allow, but in a manner which is also free from all control, and exempted from all actual responsibility. And yet I do not hesitate to proclaim it aloud, whatever prejudices may at first be raised against such an order of things, the English aristocracy is an honour to humanity, and a striking phenomenon in the world and in history. Having always been associated with the interests of the people, it has never ceased to claim the rights of the least important citizen just as boldly as it

Admiral's One Aristocrat - But is  
Primogeniture its scene &

would its own; it has thrown open the road on which the nation is travelling now; it has run the same risks, defended the same cause, fought the same battle. For the hundred and fifty years since which the victory has been gained, it has neither deviated nor degenerated, it has always been ready to receive into its midst every man of eminence; a happy state of emulation, worthy fruit of the free institutions which it has founded, has been maintained amongst its highest ranks; the English aristocracy is still the *élite* of England, of that very England which maintains the first rank amongst free nations.

‘But what is to be inferred from all this? Who would be bold enough to venture on defining what part is to be assigned to the right of primogeniture in the foregoing results? Who will take upon himself to say how much of it is to be attributed to time, to events, and to circumstances? how much of it is due to the Norman Conquest in the eleventh century? how much to the Reformation in the sixteenth? how much to the revolution of 1640, or to that of 1688?’

‘And even if one could attribute to the influence of the right of primogeniture a thousand times more than is due to it in all this, when, I ask, has a fortunate accident had the privilege of modifying the notions

of justice and injustice ? of turning evil into good, and of upsetting the foundations of public morality ? Because the English aristocracy is noble and generous, is that law which despoils a whole family in order to create one of those enormous fortunes which exceed the revenues of several sovereign States of the Continent less unjust ? Is that state of things better for the reason that ecclesiastical dignities are distributed as temporal indemnification ? Is that state of things wiser where sinecures encumber every branch of the administration and of the law, and oppose an insuperable barrier to the most salutary reforms ? Though the government of India has, within the last few years, become purer, less harsh and oppressive, how many tears did not the government of Lord Clive and of Mr. Hastings cause humanity to shed ?

‘ Gentlemen, the tree of good and evil does not always bear its real fruit here below. Sometimes events seem to mock at our forethought, or, rather, seem to be so disposed by the will of Heaven as to so test our faith in the eternal principles of justice and of reason.\* One day a King of France, driven to the last expedients, either by his own extravagance or by the peculations and squanderings of his favourites, hit upon the idea

\* M. Royer-Collard’s ‘Discours sur la Septennalité.’

of selling—what ? The administration of justice ! the right of pronouncing on the fortune, on the life, on the honour of citizens ! Certainly, if there ever was an action which is abominable in the eyes of God and in those of men, it was that. Well, from this slough of venality there suddenly arose an admirable magistracy which is the honour of France and the ornament of our history, a veritable tribe of Levi devoted in its heart to the cultivation of justice, an independent and proud body politic which, despite its errors, its rash impulses, and the weaknesses it sometimes displays, is still the best title of which ancient France can boast in the eyes of posterity. I see, gentlemen, that you think as I do, that you approve of what I have said ; and yet, what do you think of a Ministry which, on the authority of such an example, should again put up justice to the highest bidder ? Gentlemen, we can no more set up an English aristocracy in France by means of the right of primogeniture than we could set up again the old *parlements* by putting up for sale the various posts of the judicature. The ways of God are inscrutable. Sometimes out of the follies, the miseries, even the crimes of humanity, it pleases Him to raise up wonderful things, which are only of short duration, and which one only sees once. But

to fall into the same faults again, to commit the same errors, to give one's self up to the same disorders, in order to give God an opportunity for performing a new miracle, would be an enterprise as impious as it would be foolish. Feeble and ignorant as we are, we only have one guide in this world, namely, our conscience; it will be a bad thing for us if we do wrong under the pretext that Providence has always the power, and sometimes the will, to bring good out of it!

Here I stopped again; my voice had grown weak, and from all sides of the House there came the cries of: 'Speak louder; speak louder.' I made a last effort, and wound up with the following peroration.

'I have trespassed on your indulgence for a long time, no doubt for too long a time. Other ideas are still confusedly floating about in my mind; but unfortunately, or, rather, fortunately, I forget them at this moment, and I will close with one last reflection.

'This Bill, whose fate depends on you, is strangely popular. Never before has any other Bill produced a similar outburst of opinion.

'We are told that that outburst proceeds from the interested parties.

'But who are here the interested parties, or, rather, who are not interested parties? Is it the nation? It is



being robbed of its political rights. Is it the electoral nobility? It is now saddled with the burden of primogeniture. Thus the clamour arises from all sides. If the lower classes of society are indignant, the higher classes, those for whom the privilege is being created, curse it and reject it. Whilst the youngest children in a family see manifest robbery in it, the elder ones look upon it with dislike; in the towns, in country places, in all ranks of life, among all parties, in all opinions, the reprobation of this Bill is the same: unanimous and universal.

‘What can really be the cause of such general consensus?—mere uneasiness? No. In France brothers do not fear each other, and every head of a family knows full well that in order to avoid the operation of the law he only requires half a sheet of unstamped paper and two minutes of attention.

‘Is it party spirit—opposition to the Government? But in that case the existing administration must indeed be thoroughly hated, detested and condemned.

‘No again. Little as I am disposed in its favour, I do not think it inspires such a degree of dislike.

‘This Bill irritates people, and they revolt at it in and for itself. Shall I say it? It appears to the public much less in the character of a bad Bill than as a bad

idea, like bad advice uttered by lips, which one is willingly accustomed to venerate. It appears like a provocation on the part of the Government, on the part of the natural guardian of individuals and families, to lay aside natural sentiments, like an encouragement to ambition and to vanity, like an appeal to the low and sordid passions which are lying dormant in men's hearts ; it is repugnant, just as a magistrate would be repugnant, who from the bench should encourage his fellow-citizens to vice, just as a father would be repugnant, who should speculate on the immorality of his own children.

‘ A Bill which is judged thus is doomed to failure.

‘ Unanimity itself in the two Chambers could certainly discredit the two Chambers, but could not secure the carrying out of its provisions for two days.

‘ All imaginable sophistry on its behalf will be powerless. Public conscience and public reason will not allow themselves to be deceived. It will be in vain to repeat this strange adage: that succession is a civil right; that the State is the legitimate heir of everyone who dies ; that the lawmakers have the right to lay hands on the property of a deceased person in order to rob his family of such and such a portion of it, to distribute his fortune according to their own will ; that the heritage of

the children is a gift bestowed by the liberality or the charity of the legislators. Those are hollow sentences, and unfortunate paradoxes which may suit some speculative publicists in their lucubrations, or some jurists who are subtle by their very profession, but which can never in the least delude the good sense of the masses ; the safest course to adopt is to avoid them.

‘Gentlemen, the Minister of Finance, at the end of his speech, thought fit to give us some advice, the wisdom of which I do not dispute. If I had the right, which I have not, to give, in my turn, some advice to the advisers of the Crown, I should say to them : Yield whilst there is yet time ; do not insist further, do not be lavish of your perseverance, for that, when out of place, degenerates into dangerous obstinacy. There are, doubtless, circumstances in which a statesman owes it to himself to oppose a whole nation in a state of tumult ; to raise his solitary voice against public opinion which is going astray ; to stand in the breach alone in order to defend the interests of truth. But that can only be the case when the truth is of such a kind that superior minds alone can grasp it. But, on the other hand, when it is a question of the peace of families, of the relations between fathers and children, the bonds between brothers and sisters, the merest day



labourer, the most insignificant artisan, knows as much of the matter as the greatest philosopher.

‘These are some of the truths which it is God’s pleasure sometimes to hide from the wise, in order to reveal them to the ignorant and simple. These are occasions when a legislator can abandon himself with closed eyes to the popular tide, and cry confidently : “Vox populi, vox Dei !”’

None of the Ministers rose to answer me, and in the state of feeling which existed in our House, it would have been labour lost. The remainder of the sitting was given up to the sorrowful lamentations of M. de Lally, and to the poor jokes of the Duc de Brancas, formerly Duc de Lauraguais. The next day we insisted on listening to two very incisive speeches, one by M. Daru, and the other by M. Mollien ; but the same silence was preserved on the Ministerial bench ; on April 7, the debate having been closed, M. Peyronnet tried to get up a fight over the amendments, which brought him new enemies and fresh rebuffs ; at last, on the 8th, in a full House, both sides having mustered in full strength, the vote on the Bill of Primogeniture was taken, and resulted in its being rejected by 120 votes to 94. As for the right of substitution, we allowed it to pass without comment ; it was, owing to the rejection of the former Bill, like a body without a head.

In the evening, the whole of Paris was illuminated.

I may say, without boasting too much, that my small success was real, and amongst the praises which it brought, those which touched me most came from a quarter whence I expected them least. Lord Holland, who was spending the winter in Paris, almost embraced me from his gouty chair; he said openly that I had converted him; I could not affirm that the conversion was durable, but, at the time, to hear him speak induced the belief that it was complete.

Several rather important events had marked the first quarter of 1826; the most regretable was the death of M. Mathieu de Montmorency. He was not, certainly, either a man of great mind or of very lofty character; in politics, as in religion, he had passed from one extreme to the other with wonderful ease. His short appearance in the character of a Minister had cost us the war with Spain, in spite of the King and M. de Villèle. Mild as he usually was in his intercourse with others, he had not erred on the side of mercy towards the conspirators during his short period of office; but he bore a great name, and had a high social position; he had inspired Madame de Staël with sincere friendship, and, perhaps without knowing it himself, had felt something more than friendship for Madame Récamier;

for those reasons, the historian dealing with that period must not pass him over in complete silence. After M. de Montmorency left the Ministry, although for a long time he had faithfully followed practices of devotion, he had redoubled his religious exercises and his mortifications of the flesh ; his health had suffered from them, and he had several times fainted during Lent. On Good Friday, at three o'clock in the afternoon, whilst kneeling before the tomb, in St. Thomas Aquinas', his parish church, between his wife and his daughter, he suddenly turned pale and fainted. Having been carried into the vestry, and from there home, to the Hôtel de Luynes, opposite the church, he had scarcely time or strength to receive the last Sacrament. For a Christian such as he was, it was to die on the field of battle, and what Christian would not envy him ?

He took leave of the scenes of this world at the moment when those questions which were nearest his heart seemed to be assuming redoubled activity.

The Abbé de Lamennais had published his famous manifesto, called '*De la Religion dans ses Rapports avec l'Ordre Politique et Civil*,' a manifesto conceived and written in his best style, to speak of him as one is accustomed to speak of great colourists ; it was a declaration of war to the declaration of 1682, an in-

vocation of the absolute infallibility of the Holy See in everything, a summons to all the kings of the world, not excluding his Most Christian Majesty, to descend from their thrones at the very first summons, and to their subjects to expel them.

M. de Montlosier had published, on the other side, his celebrated '*Mémoire à consulter sur un Système religieux tendant à renverser l'Autel et le Trône,*' which was a declaration of war against what he called the Priestly Party; an invocation to the shades of our Parliaments, and to the Constituent Assembly, against the Jesuits, whether regular or secular members of the order, who were exhumed under the name of Fathers of the Faith; a summons to the existing magistrates that they would have to leave the bench, if they hesitated to use again edicts and decrees which were still in force, and to exterminate the cursed plague for the last time.

Lastly, the King of the Netherlands, not satisfied with imposing his philosophical college at Louvain on the Catholics of his kingdom, banished from Belgium the Brothers of the Christian Doctrine, and placed the direction of primary education exclusively in the hands of laymen.

Liberty of conscience, as will be seen, cut but a poor

figure; everyone tried to get protection as best he could, and there are many means of doing so, seeing that the most difficult thing is not to persecute when one is the stronger, or to endure persecution when one is the weaker, but to have a certain amount of respect for the convictions of one's neighbour.

The scandal which Abbé de Lammenais' book caused was such that, to its great regret, Government felt itself obliged to prosecute him; and, on the other hand, the scandal was hardly less for courtiers and ecclesiastics to see a priest, and what a priest! before the correctional court; to see him, as people then said, in the same dock with thieves and prostitutes. It may be guessed how full the court was, at what a price places in the *queue* were bought, and how sightseers besieged the doors by midnight. I myself got in early through the Council Chamber, and took my place behind the judges. We were none of us repaid particularly well for our trouble, or, rather, for the annoyance we had been put to. The public Prosecutor was timid, and its accusation read rather more like an apology. The hero of the day did not make any better appearance than he has done since in our Republican assemblies. He was on that occasion a weakly priestling, suffering, insignificant, frowning and silent; he sat in a com-

fortable armchair which had been brought for him, and remained there with his hands folded and his eyes cast down; four or five little reporters were in his train, devouring him with their eyes like a savage does his fetich, vying with each other at the slightest sign as to who should pick up his handkerchief or push his footstool for him; he allowed Berryer, who himself was rather embarrassed, to finish his peroration, and then at the last moment he stammered out a few insignificant words from an ill-written paper.

He was let off with a fine of thirty francs, and the sentence was seasoned with many compliments and excuses; it was a case of very cheap martyrdom; but another sentence, which was more serious, overtook him from higher quarters. On April 30, eight days after his soothing condemnation, sixteen bishops or archbishops, who were in Paris, and had been summoned by the Archbishop of Paris himself, Cardinal de Latil, Archbishop of Rheims, the Archbishop of Aix, and the Bishop of Autun at their head, handed to the King a fulminating declaration against this book which the law had only touched in trembling and with averted eyes, and loudly claiming the liberties of the Gallican Church, and the maintenance of the principles of 1682.\*

\* See the *Annuaire* of 1826, 'Documents historiques,' p. 7; the Declaration is inserted there at length.

Could sixteen bishops be found in France at present who would do the same thing ?

The essay of M. de Montlosier created no less scandal ; but its object was quite different, and so were those who were scandalized at it. It was really nothing more than a pamphlet, but it spread with incredible rapidity ; five or six editions of five or six thousand copies were not enough for the ill-natured avidity of the public ? so much so that again in that case the Government had to make a pretence of being angry. The old *émigré* the Don Quixote of the *ancien régime*, the spectre of feudalism as we called him in fun, when he came to see us, was dismissed his small but honourable post in the Foreign Office, and momentarily deprived of his small pension ; but he soon got his revenge, and provoked a manifestation of episcopal zeal on his side. He had been punished for having dared to maintain that in spite of the law, of tribunals, of decrees, of legal sentences, there existed quietly, and under an assumed name, a certain number of Jesuit Fathers and Brothers in France. In the very midst of the discussion on the Budget, the Bishop of Hermopolis took upon himself to declare that, as a matter of fact, he knew of many examples of this terrible crime, and that, in particular, seven small seminaries were placed under the direction of these limbs of

Satan. His colleagues, whom he had not informed of his intention, were thunderstruck, and the noisy portion of the Opposition, who did not want as much as this, made more noise than usual. Those amongst us who, like myself, took no pleasure in the eating of Jesuits, and who had no fear of being devoured by them, and who saw that the Cabinet was getting deeper and deeper into the mire, laughed in their sleeves and rubbed their hands.

But what, from the point of view of unforeseen events, was the appearance of a big book, or of a small pamphlet, compared with that other apparition which, for the moment, put the whole Spanish Peninsula into a state of ferment, without mentioning the Cabinet of the Tuileries, and all the ultra-royalist crew of the Holy Alliance? I am speaking of that Constitutional Charter which only contained 144 articles and which fell from the clouds on Portugal, or rather, came to it from the New World, and made its entry into Portugal in the hands of Sir Charles Stuart, British Minister in Brazil. Everyone has heard of this escapade at the time. John VI., a petty sovereign, but real King of Portugal, Emperor *in partibus* of Brazil, having died on March 10, of apoplexy or epilepsy, I do not know which, left his petty throne and his great throne to his son Dom



Pedro ; but the latter did not care for the petty throne, and transmitted it, as part of her inheritance in advance, to his daughter, Doña Maria da Gloria—with the stipulation that she should marry her good cousin Dom Miguel as soon as possible—and saddled it with the aforementioned constitution, for what it was worth, sending the whole under cover of his good friend the King of England, through the intervention of the Minister and representative of the latter. It certainly was strange news, which could not fail to make all the Courts and all the *camarillas* of the Continent lose what little brains they had left. The introduction of the yellow fever, which is endemic to Brazil, would have caused them less trouble. The funny part of the matter is, that this charter was neither framed after the pattern of the old Portuguese liberties, nor after that of the Constitution of Cadiz, which had lately been buried at Madrid, at Naples, and at Lisbon ; it was simply the same which Benjamin Constant had offered us in 1814 ; its 144 articles were nothing but the paragraphs of this forgotten pamphlet, regularly cut up ; that *moderating power* which Benjamin Constant had invented, which he thought would produce marvellous results, and which he looked upon as a universal panacea for all the possible ills of the body

politic, held the first place in it; and the funniest part is, that its author, instead of showing himself proud of the honour which a crowned head had shown him, began to cry out about plagiarism, as might the author of a vaudeville whose opening stanzas had just been stolen, or some chemist, claiming a patent for the invention of some plaster or julep of his own making up; it was a difficult matter to induce him to be reasonable.

I do not intend to relate here the adventures of this daughter of the Emperor (I mean the charter), like the late M. Vatout related those of her elder sister, the daughter of our good King, without, however, renouncing the right of touching upon it in a few words, if occasion offers.

I will now return to the Session.

After the discomfiture of the Cabinet, the debate went on languishing and dragging out its existence over the details of the Budget.

I, nevertheless, took part in them on two occasions, of which I should like to give an account.

At the beginning of this chapter, I mentioned the affair of the Bayonne contracts, and how this matter was referred by our House to our Committee of Inquiry.

The report on it was brought up on May 22.

The speech for the prosecution, which was laid before us on the 24th, decided that our House was incompetent in the matter, since no charge was brought against Generals Guilleminot and Bordesoulle, whose presence at the trial had stayed the course of justice.

The object of this speech was, by removing the obstacle, by referring the matter again to the royal Court, after reducing it to the level of a case for the correctional police, to withdraw all the political part of the debate, and thus to cast an official veil over the disagreements which had arisen between the Dauphin and the Cabinet at the beginning of the Spanish campaign. The pretext was the Dauphin himself, whose name, it was said, with a very low bow, and whose conduct, it was said, with a still lower chuckle, must not be exposed to the chances of a public debate. The real motive, however, was to cover the shortcomings of the Ministry with a semi-royal mantle, and rather to allow some suspicions to rest on the heir-presumptive to the throne than to allow truth to treat his official instruments as they deserved.

I boldly attacked this hypocritical and faithless servility. I maintained strenuously that, in France, the King alone was inviolable; that a prince of the

blood, when he assumed the command of an army, became responsible, just like any other general. I quoted the example of the Duke of York, who narrowly escaped being impeached for allowing corruption to be introduced into the English army, and I brought out, in strong relief, the contrast between that just severity towards a guilty prince, and the cowardly flattery which was ready to sacrifice a blameless prince in order to shield the malversations of a prevaricating Ministry.

I urged the point on the Chamber ; I called upon it, I almost adjured it, to pause in the name of its own dignity, in the interest of the King and of the country, and to order a new investigation which should sift everything thoroughly, no matter what persons, whether Princes, Ministers, or Generals, might be involved in the case. I was vigorously supported by M. Decazes, and almost openly by all the servants of the Dauphin, by the officers composing his military household and by his staff. And in order to encourage them, I proved from documentary evidence the disastrous state in which he had found the army when he arrived at Bayonne. I proved, from documents, that the success of the campaign and the safety of the monarchy were due to his common sense, to his firmness, to his forethought, to his generous

confidence, and lastly to his contracts, which had been so vehemently attacked.

After three days of very animated debate, interspersed by numerous incidents, we altogether gained our point. On the proposal of M. Lainé the court, on June 10, ruled that, before deciding the case, it should be submitted to further investigation.

Between the close of the session of 1826 and the opening of that of 1827 death removed, at one blow and on the same day, ex-President John Quincy Adams, the last relic of the federalist party, which he had more than once compromised by his imprudence, and ex-President Thomas Jefferson, who had surrendered his country to the democratic party, of which he was the head.

In France death also carried off, by the same blow, and almost on the same day, Boissy d'Anglas, the ex-President of the Convention, whose name is famous through its connection with the events of Prairial, and Talma, the greatest actor who ever appeared on the French stage.

I have nothing to say about the two first, as I never had anything to do with them. In the collection of autographs at Broglie there is a letter from Jefferson to Madame de Staël, congratulating her on her daughter's marriage ; that letter I regard as a mark of honour, con-

nected as it is with the nearest and dearest object of my recollections.

I knew Boissy d'Anglas very well during my first campaigns in the House of Peers; he had nothing of the hero about him. This is what an eye-witness of the incidents of the Prairial, M. Hochet, told me about that eventful day.

Being then very young, he was one of several journalists who readily afforded the reaction of *Thermidor* the support of their pens, just as the *jeunesse dorée* afforded it that of their fowling-pieces, their sticks, and their fists. As a journalist, he was present on that day at the Convention, and he took up his position there at daybreak. Boissy d'Anglas was not president, but an old man called Vernier, who resigned the chair as soon as the uproar began, as he could not possibly check it. Sieyès was vice-president, and he was absent, and so they were obliged to have recourse to Boissy d'Anglas, the last of the former presidents. He occupied the chair during the first half of the day; that is to say, during the heat of the irruption and of the skirmish. His bearing was serious, firm, and suitable to the occasion; but he did not even try either to check the tumult, which was perhaps impossible, or to rally honest men round him, and to guide them in their re-

sistance. When the viragos who had cut off Féraud's head, who had been killed by a pistol-shot on the steps of the tribune, put this hideous trophy into his face, he pushed it aside with a feeling of horror and disgust; but as soon as the rioters had obtained possession of the field, and the Montagnards began to put their incendiary proposals to the vote, he left the chair without ending the sitting, giving it up to poor Vernier, and only came back at the head of an armed force, which was at last united, and swept the mountain, the riot and *tutti quanti* before it. 'The day,' M. Hochet continued, 'taking it all together, having ended well, we met again at night, to draw up an account of it. We ourselves were satisfied; but it was necessary for us, if we wanted to get any advantage from it, to introduce some great man and some high-spirited action, without which the end would have differed but little from the beginning. It was then that we invented the little drama which has become historic. We had no choice of heroes, seeing that Boissy d'Anglas had been nearly alone on the scene. But we endued him with a sublime attitude, and we pretended that, at the sight of the head which was presented to him, he rose majestically, put his presidential cap in front of him, and saluted the mutilated remains of his unfortunate

colleague, as Cæsar is said to have saluted the head of Pompey, which is perhaps just as untrue. Our little deceit succeeded very well at the moment; Boissy d'Anglas himself, as everyone else lent himself to it, assumed his part in it, and, since then, it has become an article of faith for simpletons, just like: "Fils de Saint-Louis, montez au ciel;" or, "La garde meurt . . . elle ne se rend pas."\* In critical circumstances there is always a chance of saying or doing something fine which nobody says nor does, but which the human heart invents afterwards, fixes on the first comer, and will never hear of its being denied.'

However, I have related what was told me by an honest and disinterested witness, and I will add that, for my part, I know nothing that might lead me to suspect the truth of the anecdote. In the Chamber of Peers we reckoned Boissy d'Anglas as one of the Opposition, but we did not count much on him; although he continually had the name of M. de Malesherbes in his mouth, and boasted that he had been brought up on the knees of that great and good man, he would leave us in the lurch whenever occasion offered; we

\* Which, it is said, General Cambronne replied to the proposals of surrender made by an aide-de-camp of Wellington, whereas the true reply is found in the finishing lines of the description of Waterloo, in Victor Hugo's "*Misérables*."



bore him a grudge for this, especially for having absented himself at the decisive moment in the Sacrilege Bill, under the pretext that he was a Protestant : as if it were necessary to believe in the Real Presence in order not to approve of cutting off the hand and the head of people who do not believe in it !

I knew Talma very well, both before and after the Restoration ; Madame de Staël often invited him to her house, and he never gave up coming frequently to ours. He was not merely a great actor, but he was a poet, and a great poet. When one spoke with him about his art, one found that he had genius, observation, and refinement ; but his ideas were confused in his head, and mixed in his language. On the stage, one might say that, mentally and bodily, he was ten feet high ; it would be too little to say that he animated it. No ! he filled it completely ; he swayed his fellow-players as he did his audience ; he could venture to do anything with impunity. I have seen him on the stage push aside an article of furniture that was in his way, and take off his cloak which was not put on comfortably, and throw it carelessly over his shoulder. He invented his parts, ancient or modern, on the spot ; he discovered and exhibited in them, without any preparation, traits of character of which the author himself had never

thought. Corneille would have been very much astonished if he had seen and heard the Auguste we saw and heard; and so would have been Racine had he seen and heard the Nero we saw and heard.

I was present at the reproduction of the 'Manlius' of De la Fosse. That terrible 'Qu'en dis-tu?' which at first made the whole house tremble and shiver, and then carried it away in a transport of admiration, surprised Talma quite as much as it did the public, and it is a thing worthy of remark, and one that greatly bears out Diderot's theory of the comedian's art, that he never failed to catch that accent, that gesture, which had come to him by inspiration, again, at each representation, and for many years. I was present at Saint-Cloud at the performance of 'The Death of Cæsar,' in the Court Theatre. Since the fall of the Republic, that piece had been laid aside in the list of plays. The Emperor, then at the height of his power, had the fancy to see it performed; at the rehearsals all went off well; Talma, who prided himself on having remained a Republican, had no taste for his show, and only repeated his part in a perfunctory manner; but on the day of the representation he suddenly ceased to be master of himself; he did not play the Brutus of Voltaire, but of Shakespeare.

It was such a combination of austerity and resignation, of greatness of soul and of tenderness, of indignation and of grief, that when he came to those simple words, 'Je ne puis lui parler,' he himself burst into sobs. The Emperor thought it was meant for him, and prohibited the piece in Paris; but, by another trick of the all-powerful upstart, he had it represented at Erfurt, before a pit filled with kings, princes and chamberlains, and he laughed maliciously to himself when he saw the effect that such a spectacle produced on such an audience.

Had I been in Paris at the time of Talma's death, I certainly should have been one of the thousands of mourners who crowded to his funeral, and I should have imagined that I was following the coffin of French, and even of foreign, tragedy. It is no exaggeration to say that he was as unique in his own way as the Emperor Napoleon was in his—the only difference between them lies in the matter of their respective pursuits.

BOOK VI.  
SIXTH PERIOD.  
1827—1830.

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I.

1827.

ON the 12th of December, the King came to open the Session of 1827, in person. His speech was short and moderate in tone, but it was ominous as regarded the press. He announced in plain terms by what blows it was menaced. Two other Bills, one on the composition of juries, and the other on the slave trade, seemed dictated by a rather better frame of mind. The speech mentioned cautiously, like a cat walking on hot coals, the troubles which had been excited in the Peninsula by the new constitution which Dom Pedro had granted to Portugal, the part which Spain took in it, and the high-handed interference of England. It was the evident intention of the King and of his

Ministry to keep aloof from these new complications. Both were heartily tired of Spain; they hoped, almost without saying a word to us, to avoid all debate. On our part, nothing was easier. The course of events was serving us exactly. So much the better for us, if there was to be one more constitutional Government in Europe; so much the better if the King of Spain trembled at it on his throne, which was only half set up again, and tried timidly to get up a quarrel with his neighbour; it would be all the better if England were to give him a rap over the knuckles. We took good care to say nothing against it. But for the same reason, or perhaps for a contrary reason, it did not suit our Extreme Right, which hated the constitution and M. de Villèle nearly equally. And so, in both Chambers, it was vehemently spoken against. In ours, M. de Chateaubriand proved one of its fiercest antagonists; in the Chamber of Deputies, M. de la Bourdonnaie thundered against it with his loud voice; the idea of seeing Ferdinand VII. embroiled in some unfortunate enterprise, and the glory of our Spanish expedition compromised in his august person, put them into a state of fury, which was only aggravated by the boastful utterances of Mr. Canning, and the way in which he gloried in having eclipsed our

prowess, as, through the emancipation of the Spanish colonies, a new world had been called into existence. *Inde ira.* But since, after all, nobody, however good Royalist he prided himself on being, was foolish enough to call on the King to declare war against England because of the good looks of his handsome nephew, and for the good pleasure of his good friends, all this was no more than a sharp passage of arms, and the only thing the public did was to laugh at it.

But, in politics, the chief thing is to be able to laugh last, and this was not our case.

As a matter of fact, on December 29, the storm, which was foreseen from the Speech from the Throne, burst over our unfortunate heads; it was let loose by the claws or paws, as one may please to call them, of Master Peyronnet, who carried it like Jupiter's eagle; it came down upon us in the shape of a Press Bill, a project which had become celebrated in the history of the Restoration, under the nickname of 'the Bill of justice and love,' quite innocently given to it by one of its supporters, and retained ironically by the public. Seeing that this Bill dealt the finishing blow to the Ministerial ascendancy of M. de Villèle, seeing also that its failure rendered inevitable the elections of 1827, which hastened the fall of the Ministry, and eventually brought

about that of the monarchy itself, it will be well to linger on it for a moment ; but first of all a few words must be said about the other contemporaneous Bill, as it was introduced on the same day, and was also announced in the Speech from the Throne, although it was of a totally different character.

I am speaking of the Bill the object of which was to increase the penalties of the slave trade.

It was the tardy fruit of the pressing representations of the English Government. Naturally, the latter had been listened to more than I had been ; naturally also, I had not been consulted.

The report on the Bill, which had been submitted to M. de Marbois, was laid before the Chamber on January 15. The debate opened on the twenty-second, and lasted four whole days. I had at first made up my mind to take no part in it ; I equally disliked attacking a Bill the object of which was good, and to support, with my approbation, provisions which seemed to me to be almost illusory ; but as men's minds got excited, and excited to such a degree that it appeared as if the abolition of the slave trade itself was to be called into question, I could not restrain myself, and I threw myself into the debate without any preparation, and under any pretext. My speech was very successful.

Having said this by the way, so as to omit none of my little achievements, as I myself am the Childe Harold of my own pilgrimage here below, let us revert to the Bill against the press ; I say against, for it certainly was so, as its authors themselves avowed.

Its appearance caused great scandal.

The mere reading of the preamble had excited numberless exclamations. Even before the Committee was appointed, petitions and complaints poured in from all four corners of France ; whilst still in its cradle, this measure nearly obtained the honours of an insurrection in miniature and of a *coup d'état* on a small scale.

On January 4, in spite of its regulation, the French Academy, on the proposal of M. Lacretelle, having decided that a petition should be presented to the King, instructed M. de Chauteaubriand, M. Villemain and M. Lacretelle to draw it up, and requested its *directeur* to solicit an audience, in order, in the name of sorrowing literature, to lay its grievance at the foot of the throne.

On the 5th, M. Villemain, *Maitre des Requêtes*, was dismissed ; M. Lacretelle, who was royal censor, was dismissed ; their fellow-worker, M. Michaud, reader to the King, was also dismissed. Matters had reached such



a pitch that the Archbishop of Paris, Monseigneur de Quelen, seemingly a Royalist if ever there was one, thought it his duty to inform his colleagues, in a letter which was openly read at a full sitting, that the existence of the Academy was threatened.

‘O vanas hominum mentes!’

Compare, for force of impressions, for the ardour of the struggle, for the manliness of attack and defence, that period and the period in which we are living, provided that, as it has been forcibly expressed, that be living and not surviving; compare that Bill which was called Draconian to the government which the press has had to put up with in France for more than ten years, with that government which was hailed as a blessing on the morrow of the *coup d'état* in 1852, and which she will perhaps regret as a shame, if ever she should be blessed with another *coup d'état* in a different direction. Gracious heavens! what have we come to?

Here, in a few words, are the provisions of this Bill, which will remain pilloried in history, even in the presence of our actual rule ‘of justice and of love.’

As regards non-periodical publications, the substitution of a delay of five days instead of twenty-four hours between the time it was deposited and the publi-

cation itself. The deposition itself was surrounded by precautions against premature or secret publication.

This rule only applied to writings of twenty pages or less.

As regards periodical publications (monthly, weekly, or daily), the responsibility was indistinctly extended to all the proprietors or shareholders, and was made real by a series of very burdensome pecuniary conditions, and their mutual responsibilities were made effective by a series of obligations in which delicacy and good faith were not always respected.

In what regards writings of every kind and of all sizes, there was an aggravation of penalties which exceeded every reasonable measure.

There was to be no publicity in matters of private libel.

Publicity was to be arbitrarily limited whenever the court so ruled.

Printers were held legally responsible for all writings extending over more than twenty pages.

All this, no doubt, was very oppressive and very hateful, but one blow more or less was a small consideration in those days: Chained Prometheus was, in a few months, to break his fetters over Vulcan's very head.

The debate was fatal to the Ministry, fatal so far as it bore witness more and more to the decline of its ascendancy, and proved to the least farseeing that its days were numbered. If it managed again, with difficulty, to obtain a committee to its own liking, if it succeeded, with still greater difficulty, in getting together a majority which was more apparent than real, it was vigorously attacked by the most decided of its own party, by the most enlightened, the most prudent, and by those who were most inclined to go over from one camp to the other in the case of success. At last, it received from M. Royer-Collard one of those sledge-hammer blows from which one does not rise up again, and which gave it up to its adversaries, to be, in a manner, carried away on a stretcher.

Were I to live for a hundred years, I should never forget the mingling of astonishment, of admiration, and of merriment, which repeatedly came from the benches of the Chamber and from all the galleries on hearing such apostrophes as the following levelled directly at the Ministry :

‘ We no longer live in the days of the great debates which filled the first years of the Restoration ; the invasion which we are combating is directed no longer against license but against liberty, and not against the liberty

of the press alone, but against all natural, political, and civil liberty, as against something that is naturally baneful and fatal. In the inmost thoughts of the law, it was imprudent, on the great day of Creation, to allow man to escape free and intelligent into the midst of the universe; from that, all evils and errors have sprung. A higher wisdom has come to make good the faults of Providence, to check its impendent liberality, and to render to humanity the service to raise it to the happy innocence of brutes. . . . A Suspicion Bill, on a large scale, which would put the whole of France in prison, in the custody of the Ministry, would be nothing but an exact consequence, and a judicious application of its principles. Compared with the Press-Bill, it would have the advantage of cutting off, at one stroke, the liberty of moving, going or coming, and all other liberties. The Ministry, in introducing it, could say with more authority :

‘ Evil produces a hundred times more evil than good produces good; the Author of all things formerly thought otherwise, but He was mistaken.’

‘ When liberty is stifled, intelligence, its noble companion, ought to be done away with. Truth is a good thing; error is an evil. Let error and truth perish together. As a prison is the natural remedy for liberty,

ignorance will be the natural remedy for intelligence. Ignorance is the real science of man and of society. This equality of destiny between truth and error, this superb confusion of good and evil, is, in the order of justice, the confusion between the innocent and the guilty. Was not that inquisitor animated, and, as it were, illuminated by the spirit of your Bill, who, in the war with the Albigenes, had heretics and orthodox alike thrown into the same flames, so as to make sure that not one heretic should be spared ?

‘At the root of all tyranny, there lies the same contempt for humanity—a contempt which shows itself by the same sophistries. Present legislation only proscribes thoughts, it allows life to be safe. That is the reason why it need not, like barbarians do, send devastation, massacre, and fire before it; enough for it to overthrow the eternal rules of right. In order to destroy the newspapers, it must make that unlawful which is lawful, and that lawful what human and divine laws have declared unlawful; contracts must be annulled, spoliation be legitimised, robbery invited. That is what your Bill does. “A law that denies morality is atheistic; a law which mocks at faith given and received, is the overthrow of society.” Obedience is not due to it, “for,” says Bossuet, “a right against right

exists nowhere on earth." Alas! we have lived in times when the authority of the law having been usurped by tyranny, wrong was called right, and virtue crime. During that painful ordeal, we did not seek the rule of our actions in the law, but in our consciences. We obeyed God rather than men. We are the same men who forged passports, and perhaps were guilty of perjury in order to save innocent lives. God will judge us in His justice and His mercy. Your Bill, know it well, will be in vain, because France is worth more than her Government. Amongst us, there exists enough noble sentiment, enough honour and probity, to repel your corruptions. Contracts will be executed; everyone will religiously pay his debt. Which of you gentlemen would not, in his inmost thoughts, brand the mark of infamy on the brow of the faithless depository, who would make use of the odious privileges which are offered to him?

‘ But though you may deprive the Bill of its principles, and strip it of its incontestable consequences, the fact that it stifles right and violates morality, causes it to remain a tyrannous Bill. Now, it is the same with tyranny as it is with liberty; it is not enough to write it; it has its precedents and its conditions. Twice in twenty years, and we have not forgotten it, tyranny

has weighed upon us, either with the revolutionary axe in its hand, or its brow bright with fifty victories. The axe is blunted; no one, I believe, would wish to seize it again, and no one would be able to do so. The circumstances which sharpened it, will not reproduce themselves in the course of several centuries. It is in glory alone, at once warlike and political like that which dazzled us, that tyranny is to dip its arms for the future; deprived of glory it becomes ridiculous. Councillors of the crown, known or unknown, let us be allowed to ask you what you have hitherto done that raises you so far above your fellow citizens, that you are to be allowed to inflict tyranny upon them? Tell us on what day you acquired glory? What battles have you won; what immortal services have you rendered your King and country? Obscure and ordinary beings as we are, it seems to us that you only surpass us in rashness. Tyranny could never reside in your feeble hands, and your conscience tells you so, even more loudly than we ourselves do. . . .

‘Your Bill proclaims the existence of a faction in the Government, as openly as if that faction proclaimed itself, and were to march with flying colours. I will not take the trouble of asking it what it is, whence it comes, whither it is going, for it would only lie. I

judge it by its works. Last year it dug up, out of the middle ages, the right of primogeniture, the year before, sacrilege; now it proposes to us the destruction of the press. Let it be called a counter revolution or what not, that is a small matter; it is retrograding; by fanaticism, privilege and ignorance, it is tending towards barbarism, and towards the absurd sway which barbarism favours.

‘It is a laborious enterprise, and one which it will be difficult to carry out. For the future not a line will be printed in France; I will grant it. A brazen frontier will preserve us from foreign contagion; very well. But the world has long been open to the discussion of truth and falsehood. Such discussions fill innumerable volumes, which are read and re-read day and night by a curious generation. Libraries and books have taken possession of men’s minds, and thence they must be expelled. Have you a Bill for that?’

‘Gentlemen, said M. Royer Collard in conclusion, I cannot agree to the amendments which your Commission proposes, nor to any other amendment. The Bill is neither worthy nor susceptible of them. There are no terms possible with the principles of tyranny which have dictated it. I reject it purely and simply out of respect for humanity which it degrades, and for



justice which it outrages ; I reject it out of fidelity to the Monarchy, which it will perhaps overthrow, which it certainly compromises, and which it lowers in the opinion of the people by showing them the futility of its promises.'

In the end, the Bill, was carried by a majority, of two hundred and thirty-three to one hundred and thirty-four votes ; but it was a majority openly in a state of disorder, and which showed by its attitude, as much as by its language, that it was not really compact, and that in order to secure it again, it must not be tried too severely.

On March 19, this fine work of art was brought up to us, enriched by a preamble, no longer arrogant like that with which M. Peyronnet had introduced it into the Chamber of Deputies, but on the contrary, humble and insinuating. He did not hope to make us swallow the pill with a good grace all at once. The debate had borne its fruits. But he hoped to get at least some slight advantage from our debate, and he would have been satisfied with however little we might have granted him ; it would have been so much gained from the enemy of the moment, that is to say from the press and the newspapers.

Whether he was ashamed or not, he had to put up

with the result. Nothing was granted him, even less than nothing, if one may be permitted to use the expression; all that his friends in our committee, of which I was a member, could obtain, was that instead of proposing the rejection of the Bill, pure and simple, we should remodel it from beginning to end, only retaining the heads of the chapters. I worked strongly and resolutely, and as I was the youngest, the most active, and perhaps, I may be allowed to add, the most expert in this matter, all the work fell upon me. From that time M. Peyronnet, learning that all my proposals had been admitted, threw up the whole thing, and on April 17, took the heroic resolution to address a decree to us, withdrawing the evil.

A victory gained by which the nation was saved, could not have produced more effect than this news. The masses, which for a long time had not taken any interest in political debates, were moved by it. For one class of artizans who were numerous in the capital, its withdrawal relieved them from a great anxiety, and for others it was a striking triumph over influences and ideas which were hostile to constitutional liberty. Illuminations and fireworks lit up the most populous streets, some disorders always inseparable from such tumultuous joy had to be repressed, but no serious accident troubled

the popular rejoicings, which were spontaneous and general, and which were renewed in all the large towns of the kingdom.

An event which had nothing to do with all this, except that it happened during the height of our labours, contributed, very indirectly no doubt, to this happy solution.

The old Duc de la Rochefoucauld died March 27.

He was the last of that amiable and glorious group of liberal noblemen who prepared, in the salons and at Court, the glorious opening of the French Revolution, and who later did it honour by their disinterestedness and their courage; he had founded on his return from America, where the Terror had forced him to find a refuge, the greater part of our philanthropic establishments, and had but recently given up the direction of them, having been forced to do so by the importunities of the Minister of the Interior. His resignation had created a scandal, and his death was a cause of mourning for all these establishments. When the time came, for transferring his coffin to his parish Church of the Assumption, it was a matter of emulation amongst the young men who had been educated through his care, and often at his expense, as to who should be most eager in rendering him the last honours. The coffin was borne

by the pupils of the Ecole des Arts and Métiers, of Châlons, many others offering to relieve them.

I was present at that sad ceremony.

I shall never in my life forget the contrast presented by the armorial bearings of the deceased, and the funeral trappings with which the coffin was covered.

There was to be seen, in embroidery which the vivid colours made more striking, the figure of the fairy Melusina, holding in her hand a little mirror in which she looked at herself smiling, and above it, the family motto : ' C'est mon plaisir.'

Until then all went well.

But, when it came to carrying the coffin from the church to the cemetery, and the young men had again placed it upon their shoulders and set off to their destination, suddenly the Commissary of Police took it into his head to get angry. Producing an obsolete decree, he ordered the undertaker's men to do their business, and the gendarmerie to assist them. A fight in the open street was the result, and in the struggle, the unfortunate coffin, having slipped from the hands of the combatants, fell and opened, to the awful horror of the mourning family and of the bewildered assistants, and the corpse rolled into the gutter. The mischief was soon remedied by all hands, and as well as possible; but it

aroused a cry of indignation, first in the street, then in the city, and afterwards throughout the whole of France. The House of Peers was justly excited by the news, and sternly demanded satisfaction from the Ministry for this shameful act. M. de Corbière was vigorously abused, and I, for my part, did not spare him. There the matter ended, as it should, for the moment; but it added fuel to the coals of fire which were being heaped upon the head of the Ministry, and, after such an affair, to risk the discussion of the Peyronnet Bill, would have been ultra-Corbière and ultra-Peyronnet itself.

The debate had taken place on April 2; on the 17th the Bill was withdrawn; on the 29th there was a grand review of the National Guard in full uniform; there were loud cries of 'Vive le Roi!' mingled in some regiments with cries of 'Down with the Ministers!' and even of 'Down with the Jesuits!' that was all; nevertheless, on his return to the castle, the King felt satisfied; he was even said to have authorised the Commander-in-Chief to express his satisfaction in an order of the day, but whilst defiling along the Rue de Rivoli, before the Ministry of Finance, and through the Place Vendôme, opposite the Ministry of Justice, these same regiments, giving way to their noisy and riotous temper, repeated their shouts to their hearts' content,

much more than in the Champ de Mars when in the presence of the King! This time, however, M. de Villèle lost what principally constituted his power and merit; I mean his coolness, moderation, and patience; he rushed, boiling with rage, to the Tuileries, summoned his colleagues there, and with loud cries which apparently equalled those of the recalcitrant legions, demanded that the whole National Guard should be disbanded. The debate was animated, and the Council very divided; M. de Chabrol and Monseigneur d'Hermodol vied with one another in their resistance. The Duc Doudeauville resigned, but M. de Villèle came out triumphantly; the decree of disbandment took the place of the friendly order of the day in the next issue of the *Moniteur*.

After the catastrophe, or, if the expression seems too pretentious, after the fiasco of the Bill of 'Justice and Love,' the Session became dull and only lingered; but this important event had been preceded in our Chamber by a debate which was not devoid of interest. I mean the discussion relating to the rules to be adopted when drawing up the jury lists. The proposed Bill, which was neither better nor worse than all those which had been made, or will be made on the subject, provided that no one should appear on those lists but the electors

of the period, that is the men who paid taxes of a minimum yearly value of three hundred francs. Siméon, in the name of the commission of which he was *rapporteur*, demanded, on the contrary, that the circle should be rather widened, in order to embrace all those whose antecedents, functions and position, seemed to guarantee their capacity, to a certain extent. The amendment became the subject of a most animated debate ; we only carried it with great difficulty, and without exactly knowing what we were doing. Later, circumstances caused it to bear unexpected fruit ; it was the germ, in our political legislation, of that famous principle of capacity, which since has played so great a part in our internal debates ; it prepared, in 1828, the Revolution of 1830, and served as a pretext for that of 1848.

I hardly took any part in the debate. I had, as I have mentioned above, ideas on this subject which were personal to myself, which I could not hope to see prevail under M. de Villèle, as I could not do so under M. de Serre ; but I will say this of Siméon, that he defended the amendment with as much cleverness as vigour, and that he evinced sentiments on the jury question which there was no reason to credit him with, if an anecdote is to be believed, which was generally accepted in its time, and which I write here in passing,

in a spirit of justice, and in order to give honour where honour is due.

It was I think in 1807, at the height of the imperial reaction against anything which was at all unorthodox in the matter of Liberalism, at the very height of imperial flattery towards the old régime which was becoming more and more *redivivus*. In the *conseil d'Etat* the code of criminal instruction was being discussed. When they came to the matter relating to juries, Siméon (the Siméon of that time) fought with all his might against this institution, which had such an ill-sounding origin, and reproduced, at the cost of much leavening, all the ordinary passages in which professed criminal lawyers abound. He was vigorously supported by the majority of the converted Jacobins who filled the *conseil d'Etat*, and timidly opposed by a few late comers. The Emperor listened without saying a word. He evidently enjoyed the attack, but did not open his lips. When the discussion seemed exhausted, he turned to Treilhard, *rapporteur* and president of the Legislative section, and said to him point-blank, 'Peut-on supprimer la publicité des débats au criminel?' ('Can we legally exclude the public from the hearing of criminal cases?'). At this question, which seemed to fall from the clouds, all the Council remained speech-



less and open-mouthed ; some in a state of consternation at the enormity of the matter ; the others quite confused at not having divined that their goodwill could go as far as that. After having waited for a few seconds, the Emperor returned to the charge in a tone which would not allow of silence ; Treilhard, on the stool of repentance, murmured in a low voice that it appeared impossible to him, and Cambacérès, a Cambacérès though he was, bowed his be-wigged head in sign of assent. 'In that case,' said the Emperor, 'we must not think of suppressing the jury.'

The master of that period was indeed a master-mind. He saw deeper and more clearly into the future in matters, about which he did not understand the first word, than all the scribes and pharisees of his synagogue.

Almost at the same time there disappeared from the political scene a much more considerable man than Manuel. Mr. Canning had died August 8.

It was scarcely six months since he had seen the realization of the wishes of his life, and risen to the highest position that a citizen can occupy in this Europe of ours. He died Prime Minister of the United Kingdom of Great Britain.

He had entered Lord Liverpool's Cabinet in 1823,

at Lord Castlereagh's death, and by his presence, he had changed its direction and its character from black to white. He had broken with the Holy Alliance; supported the Spanish revolution; protected that in Portugal; called into existence the republics of South America; and recently again, had guaranteed, with an armed hand against Ferdinand VII., the new constitution which the Emperor Don Pedro had given to Portugal. He had successfully caused three men of the highest order to enter the Cabinet of which he was then the soul and the good genius, until such time as he should become its head. He was the hope of the Liberal Party in England and in Europe, when the sudden death of Lord Liverpool, had in a manner forced him on his King and country as Prime Minister; but then his troubles began. Nobody would be his second, or his seconds, to speak more correctly.

The great Tories who had been his colleagues in Lord Liverpool's administration, left him suddenly, for fear of seeing themselves drawn by him, that is to say by his eloquence, his popularity and the authority of his new position, into granting Catholic emancipation. The Whigs, whose adversary he had been for twenty years under Mr. Pitt, Mr. Perceval and even Lord Liverpool, mistrusted his new Liberalism, and repelled

his advances. For several days, it was thought that he would not succeed in forming a Cabinet; but the more moderate amongst the Whigs at last allowed themselves to be persuaded; he surmounted the difficulty as well as he could, but alas! only for a moment; he had hardly overcome the violent opposition which his late colleagues had offered him under the lead of the Duke of Wellington; he had scarcely signed the treaty of July 6, which prepared the way for Greek independence, when he was seized by a raging illness at Chiswick, a country seat of the Duke of Devonshire's, a few miles from London. He died, if I am not mistaken, in the same little room where Mr. Fox died in 1804.

‘Multis ille bonis flebilis occidit  
Nulli flebilior,’

than to the friends of moderate liberty in France, and in England, in Greece and in the new world, everywhere in a word where the struggle had begun between the good party and its two adversaries, the counter-revolutionaries and the revolutionaries. Canning belonged exactly to Mr. Pitt's school, being liberal in the measure of what was possible and firm towards the enemy of the moment. His mind was brilliant and cultivated; his eloquence unequalled. He had gained much, year by year, and his death was a real source of grief to all good men.

## II.

1828.

THE Ministry of M. de Villèle having had to resign, it was replaced by a new administration headed by M. de Martignac.

It was not only with us that in January of the year of grace, 1828, the administration had put on a new skin. The same thing had happened on the other side of the Straits of Dover. Mr. Canning, dying at a very unfortunate time for the cause, and also for himself, had left to his successor, Lord Goderich, formerly Mr. Robinson, a rather nondescript or patchwork Cabinet, that is to say, composed of Liberal Tories and moderate Whigs, who felt rather hampered at thus finding themselves members of the same administration, and were treated without ceremony as renegades by their respective parties. Mr. Canning did not prove too much, or yet enough, to keep them united in reality, or even merely in appearance ; a stronger hand still, and more uncontested ascendancy would have been

required. Lord Goderich had neither; he was a Liberal Tory, but Premier, as they say in England, by chance and force of circumstances. He exercised no authority over his hybrid flock; and as he could not conceal from the public, in a Cabinet on which a strong light was thrown, if not the disunion, at any rate the want of unanimity that existed among them, it became needful for the King to intervene. The King had at first intended to persist in the good course; that was his natural inclination. He had tried to replace Lord Goderich by another Tory, who should be nearly as Liberal, and had addressed himself to my excellent friend Lord Harrowby, who was, however, too experienced in party matters to allow himself to be caught by the bait of such an entangled inheritance. So, after a few useless attempts, it became needful to take energetic measures, and for want of another way out of the difficulty, to entrust the Government to the Duke of Wellington. That of course meant dismissing the moderate Whigs. It meant introducing the Tories of the old school, under the flag of their natural chief. It was thoroughly to change the policy of the Cabinet. The Liberal Tories instead of being the Conservative element in it, became the extreme Left, and only were held by a thread.

This change was no good to us, I mean to our

party, and still less to our inexperienced Ministry. It was quite clear that, instead of relying one on the other, as we had hoped, the two Governments of England and France were going to pull in different directions; perhaps even to become open adversaries. What was going to become of our common work, that poor little newly-born kingdom of Greece, this son of a good mother, foisted in a measure upon the vulgar indifference of the Villèle Ministry, or on to the susceptible ambition of Russia, and on to the gruff, crabbed temper of John Bull, by the classical and juvenile portion of French opinion, and by the generous instincts of Mr. Canning? What was to become of that treaty of July 6, to which the Duke of Wellington himself had lent his 'paw' although turning up his nose.

We were not long in finding out.

The two speeches from the Throne (I am still talking the political slang of our time) were delivered in London and in Paris, within less than a week of each other. It was impossible to pass over in silence the battle of Navarino—which had been fought in honour of the above-named treaty, as if it had not taken place—the treaty would have remained a dead letter, and soon have become a matter of mockery.

This is how the King of England expressed himself on this matter, on January 29 :

‘In the course of the measure adopted with a view to carry into effect the objects of the treaty, a collision, wholly unexpected by His Majesty, took place in the Port of Navarino between the fleets of the contracting Powers and that of the Ottoman Porte.

‘Notwithstanding the valour displayed by the combined fleets, His Majesty deeply laments that this conflict should have occurred with the naval force of an ancient ally, but he still entertains a confident hope that this untoward event will not be followed by further hostilities, and will not impede that amicable adjustment of the existing differences between the Porte and the Greeks, to which it is so manifestly their common interest to accede.’

Now this is how the King of France understood that event, and explained it, on his part :

‘The treaty which I signed with the King of England and the Emperor of Russia, laid down the basis for the pacification of Greece, and I have reason to hope that the efforts of my allies and myself will triumph over the resistance of the Ottoman Porte, without having to resort to force.

‘The battle of Navarino was at the same time an

occasion of glory to our arms, and a splendid pledge of the union of the three flags.'

It was not difficult to draw the horoscope of a union which was based on such unanimity.

In the meanwhile, whilst this difference of language was rejoicing our common enemies, almost at the same moment, that is to say on January 16, Count Capo d'Istria, a Greek by birth, an ex-minister of the Emperor Alexander at the time he held rather liberal views, and who had fallen into disgrace as soon as that Prince gave up the good cause, landed in Cegina, under the auspices of the three Guardians of Greece, and took over the direction of a government *in esse* and of a kingdom *in posse*. I knew him very well during the few years of his exile at Geneva; he was a good man, with a lofty soul, a firm character, an enlightened mind, initiated in the conduct of public affairs, and justly held in high estimation by all statesmen whose opinion was valued in Europe; that was more than those deserved who caused him, or allowed him, to perish.

This was another check for us, certainly an indirect, but yet, a real check, which hung fire for some time, but which we felt from the very first. The Constitution, which, as some said, was granted, and others said, was imposed on Portugal, by the Emperor of Brazil,



Dom Pedro, had nearly reached the end of its short career. The infant, Dom Miguel, had hardly taken possession of the Crown of Portugal, under the two-fold condition of accepting the said Constitution, and of marrying the Infanta Doña Maria, when he openly prepared to hold them very cheap, by inciting the nation and the army, who, as was said, asked for nothing better, to the counter revolution.

In spite of the unfortunate incidents, which our opponents called sorrowful prognostications, our new Ministry met the ordeal of the address boldly. The speech in which M. de la Ferronays inaugurated the new policy was very well received and deserved to be so. Nobody opposed it, in a Chamber, (of course I am speaking of the House of Peers) into which M. de Villèle had introduced seventy-nine petty noblemen of his own kind. I had remained to support my old and new friends ; but all I got for my trouble was my prospective eloquence.

The Bill for the annual revision of the electoral lists was one of the principal ones that were discussed during the new Session. The manœuvres and the want of rectitude on the part of the fallen Ministry, in the matter of elections did not constitute the most important grievances against it, but they were the most recent, and the most notorious, and it was impossible

not to try to redress them. The new Ministry did so with a good grace. The Bill which it introduced on March 25, was, if not perfect, at least well and sincerely meant. The amendments which we suggested, (I say, we, because, whilst it was being carried through the Chamber of Deputies, I had a good deal to do with them) were bold, efficacious and decisive. The Ministry took charge of them, at its own risk and peril, in the present and future; in the present, because the Bill was nearly being compromised in our Chamber, which was naturally timid and was packed with new comers; for, in the case of a dissolution it was a case of burning their ships. M. de Martignac did wonders; the whole Liberal Party, the Left Centre and the Left acted together like one man, the Right Centre was divided in both Chambers, and in ours particularly, and my friends and I, were obliged to fight to the bitter end.

And then, in the second place, there was the proposal of a loan, in order to place our military position on a sound footing in case of the eventualities which the imminent rupture between the Porte and Russia might bring about; a rupture whose indirect but original cause, was certainly Greek independence, and that treaty of July 16, to which France was certainly

not only a contracting party, but morally the principal party.

The proposal was very favourably received in both Chambers ; M. de la Ferronays, for the second time, gained great credit from it, and the new Greek government found fresh encouragements in it.

Almost at the same moment the first hero, the first martyr of that cause, Prince Alexander Ipsilanti, who, after having been encouraged recklessly by the Emperor Alexander, had been abandoned by him, died at Vienna, having suffered seven years' imprisonment—two years in the fortress of Mongatz in Hungary, and five in the fortress of Theresienstadt in Bohemia. He had only just obtained his liberty, on the condition that he should not leave the residence which the Austrian Government had assigned to him. This shows most clearly what would have been the fate of M. de la Fayette but for the interposition of General Bonaparte.

Lastly, there was the Press Bill—a breaker for every new administration, the successful management of which could alone win for a Government the name of masters of their craft, and which now more than ever had to be brought to a successful issue, since it was absolutely necessary to wash the dirty linen of the Ministry that had been dismissed.

I have told, in its proper place, what happened in

our Chamber with regard to the Bill of M. de Peyronnet, which was known under the nickname of the bill of 'justice and of love.'

I related how the Committee, of which I was a member, and which was appointed to examine that Bill, at once decisively passed two resolutions. The first was, without mercy or pity, to get rid of the very foundation of the scheme, of its plan, its spirit, its tendencies, at most retaining its title—*stat nominis umbra*. The second was to replace it by a new Bill, which, while it showed itself rather more efficacious than the Bill of 1819, should respect the reality and the essential conditions of the liberty of the press.

As I was at that time the youngest and most active of the members of the Committee, and as I had also most experience in the matter, I suggested the plan, the outline, and the chief provisions of the new Bill; and it was the very success of my proposals, the fear of seeing them adopted one after the other—how do I know? for everything was possible at such a crisis—it was the very fear perhaps of my being appointed *rapporteur* that eventually decided M. de Peyronnet to bury his pet child with his own hands.

M. Portalis, like myself, was a member of the Committee, and he had supported me strongly, and strongly approved of my proposals. Having become Garde des

Sceaux\* in the new Ministry, and it thus being his duty, as far as the press was concerned, to modify the iniquitous measures taken against it by M. de Villèle's government, and of which the bill of M. de Peyronnet was but the crowning act and the sanction, I had reckoned upon his taking our common project for the theme of his work, and in this I was not mistaken; but I had also expected, at the same time, that I should have been in some degree consulted on the embodying of that project into a definite proposal.

To tell the truth, I had even fixed my pretensions higher. It was a common occurrence at that period, when a scheme of some importance was being prepared, to admit such of the friends of the Ministers on whom the latter counted to support them, to the discussion of the scheme in the presence of the King. I thought I was in a fair way to obtain that honour, but nothing came of it. The project was not communicated to me; others, whose names I do not remember at this moment, were summoned. I felt angry at this, and wrongly so, for I thus overlooked the difficulties of the Ministry as regarded the King; it was, besides, very natural that, to a certain point, the pressing nature of my demands should be feared, but I mention it because from that

\* The *Garde des Sceaux* (Keeper of the Seals) in France is also Minister of Justice.

moment my friends and I began, if not to separate ourselves from the Ministry, at least not to act so closely with it, and to take up that intermediate position which soon led us to commit the greatest fault with which we have to reproach ourselves.

Everything considered, the Bill was a good one, or nearly so, and, in concert with my good friend Sainte-Aulaire, I tried to supply what was still required to make it so ; for this reason we asked to meet M. Portalis *ad hoc*, but he received us coldly and hardly listened to us. Having been brought before the Chamber of Deputies on April 14, this Bill, of which I was three-parts the father, was, on May 29, the subject of an insignificant report, and was carried on June 19, after a still more insignificant discussion of twenty days, which only turned more or less on questions of security, of fine, and of delay. Having been laid before our Chamber on June 25, it was no better attacked or defended, although M. de Chateaubriand and M. Molé took part in the debate. As a member of the committee I neither attacked nor defended it, as I did not think it right, either to point out its weak points which nobody noticed, or to constitute myself their champion in the position in which I had been placed.

Here is what I have found on this matter in a letter of July 4 :

‘Siméon read us his report this morning; he will place it before the Chamber to-morrow, and we shall debate it Monday or Tuesday.

‘I have learnt from Decazes that the question whether I should be *rapporteur* caused a slight discussion; the whole House expected that such would be the case, but the Richelieu Ministry strenuously opposed my appointment. The present Ministry was appealed to, and the reply, through Portalis, was, that such a nomination would be regarded very unfavourably.

‘All this petty intriguing is rather contemptible; but it shows you with what sort of people we have to deal, and what we have to expect from them. You will understand that I did not much care to make the report. If I had much vanity as an orator, this report would not give me much scope to distinguish myself. I would willingly sell my small popularity cheaply, but I have not such a thirst for martyrdom, that I am dying of the wish to provoke the attacks of the Liberal newspapers in order to serve the Ministry. Nevertheless, reasonable as I believe it to be, not to allow one’s self to be irritated by slight tokens of envy and of ill-will, where some real public interest is met with, yet I think it is natural to preserve a reserved demeanour towards those who bear us ill-will without foundation, excuse or pretext. And so, as the Bill is

quite safe, I intend to hold my tongue, and thus to show that I am aware of all that has happened, and that, from this moment, I accept the separation ; or, if I speak, I shall speak on my own account, without showing any feeling against the Bill, nor interest in those who introduce it.'

I have found this also, on the same subject, dated the 13 :

'Far from my silence in the general debate having harmed me, I think that, in the House, it has given me more and more the attitude of a man who does not speak for the sake of speaking, but who makes use of speech as an instrument to gain an end, and who leaves it to others to gratify their vanity. In the debate on the clauses, I shall defend those that are my own particular work, should they be attacked ; I shall defend them, saying that they are mine, and I shall find fault with those of the Government, in order to show that there is no connection between us.'

If I recall these small personal incidents, it is not in order to do honour to myself ; it is rather to apologise for them, and to show once more, on what slender basis, under a Parliamentary government, rest those party connections, which decide the direction of public affairs. If I was not the most sensible and the most disinterested of the public men of my time, I certainly was not the



reverse, and yet, from a foolish feeling of self love, I helped to separate the doctrinaire party from the new Ministry, our sheet anchor ; hence, perhaps, the fall of that Ministry, and, perhaps also, the revolution of July.

*'O vanas hominum mentes, O pectora cœca.'*

But we must not anticipate ; let us retrace our steps ; in any case these debates on the press were now no longer the principal object of public attention ; others, with which thank God, I had nothing to do, occupied the first place.

I am speaking of the famous decrees about the small seminaries, and of the rather absurd prosecution which was unluckily instituted against the late Ministry.

When I was relating the opening acts of our Ministry, in the days of its honeymoon, I mentioned, as one that was most favourably received, the formation of a Commission which was charged to examine the interior management of the establishments in which young men were prepared for the Church ; It was a question of finding out, whether these establishments had not, under the Episcopal ægis, become mere lay colleges, which thus avoided the supervision and the jurisdiction of the University ; above all it was a question of finding out whether they were not placed under the direction of the Jesuits in defiance of the laws and of the decrees, which prohibit the existence of this religious order in France.

This commission which had been very carefully selected, was composed of nine members who were chosen from the highest ranks of the Clergy, the Magistracy and the Civil Service. After working assiduously for several months, it had unanimously come to the conclusion that it was necessary to reduce the small Seminaries to their original limits ; but whilst recognising the fact that eight of these establishments were actually directed by Jesuit Fathers, it considered that the toleration of that society in the kingdom depended exclusively on the general policy of the State, and that the Bishops need not take that into consideration in filling the vacant posts of their dioceses.

One must have lived at that period, to have any idea of the indignation excited by this report, which certainly was very simple, but as a matter of fact still more reasonable, and which, in any case, did not teach anything new. The outcry was general, as were also the expressions of disapproval on the part of moderate people ; The press thundered with its hundred voices, and the agitation was equally great inside and outside the Chambers.

Our Ministry, which had recently assumed office, which was timid, vacillating and not very firmly established, was not strong enough to face such a storm,

even supposing that it wished to do so, which is very doubtful, and the King, who appreciated the impossibility of replacing them at present, preferred to appear to bow his head as if he were beaten, in order to heap coals of fire on the heads of us Liberals.

In short, on June 16, two decrees appeared in the *Moniteur*, one countersigned by the Bishop of Beauvais, Minister of public worship, and the other by the Keeper of the Seals, M. Portalis, but which were both approved without any ceremony by the royal hand.

The first fixed the number of the small Seminaries, and that of young Levites which might be educated in each, a proportion which was rigidly restricted to the religious wants of each diocese. All were obliged to live in the house and be ordained at the end of two years. This took away from heads of families, who, not without reason, as I shall explain at the proper time and place, mistrusted the university education, all hope of escaping from it except by private education at home.

The second handed over to the government of the University, eight establishments directed by members of an unauthorised religious congregation (read Jesuits), and added that, for the future, no one would be

allowed to remain in charge, either of the direction or of the instruction in educational establishments, whether clerical or lay, who had not, on his oath, cleared himself of all suspicion of belonging to an unauthorized congregation.

It was now the turn of good Royalists, of good Catholics, of good souls, to use the expression in its rather vulgar sense, to spit fire and flame and to cry out about impiety, about religious persecution, the civil constitution of the clergy, and revolutionary orgies. The newspapers of the party did not spare themselves; the poor Bishop of Beauvais became a black sheep; no more episcopal visitors were to be seen at the receptions of the Minister of Public Worship; they vied with each other in pointing at the apostate.

This is how I related it, in a letter dated June 18, that is to say, on the next day but one after the events.

‘ You will see in to-day’s paper the great event of yesterday morning. The famous decrees have appeared. The measure is about as efficacious as it can be, under existing circumstances, as it does not wound liberty of conscience in any way; it would, doubtless, be better to abolish the University, to leave instruction unrestricted and allow the Bishops to educate their pupils as they pleased in the little Seminaries; but as long

as the University is maintained, they cannot complain because of their being placed under its jurisdiction, like everybody else ; they are even very much favoured, seeing that they are exempted from University government, as far as the so-called ecclesiastical schools are concerned ; and yet, but for that, to all appearance, there would be no more priests, and vicious as such an order of things may be, it would be a bold step to take, to lay violent hands on the only existing means of recruiting the clergy.

‘ Altogether, I think people are satisfied, and they are right to be so.

‘ The King, having taken his determination, showed more firmness than one had a right to expect from him. The Archbishop of Paris had an audience, and in the name of fourteen Bishops assembled in Paris, presented a letter to him, which he would not accept, saying that fourteen Bishops did not constitute the clergy, neither would he listen to the clergy itself, as his determination was taken.’

This suffices to show what was still at that period the state of my mind on such a weighty matter ; it will be seen further on what experience and reflection have since taught me.

The unfortunate decrees continued to provide food for polemics for the newspapers and the Chambers during

the whole year. The debate was very violent when it came to the question of obtaining a credit to found scholarships for the benefit of the establishments, which were to be created at a fresh expense ; the poor Bishop of Beauvais could not obtain the assistance of his colleagues in anything which more or less touched on such matters. A hundred thousand copies of a violent protest, drawn up, it was said, by the Abbé de Lamennais, were published at one sou each, and widely circulated ; many prelates threatened open resistance ; at last the Archbishop of Toulouse, having been called upon to give the information which had been officially demanded of him, had the following letter inserted in the newspapers of his diocese :

‘ MY LORD,—The motto of my family, which was given to them in 1120 by Callixtus II., is the following :

“ *Etiam si omnes, ego non.*’

‘ That is also the motto of my conscience.

‘ I have the honour to be, with the most respectful consideration which is due to a Minister of the King, etc.’

The King considered himself personally offended by this insolent missive ; he forbade the Archbishop to appear at Court till further orders, but he adopted the

best means of putting a stop to the outcry; he appealed directly to the Holy See. M. Lasagni, Councillor to the Court of Cassation, of Roman origin, and one of the best men amongst those who became French at the time of the reunion of the Roman States to France under the Empire, was entrusted with a confidential mission in this matter; he was a man of rare intellect, a most able lawyer, and a sincere and sensible Catholic. He succeeded without much difficulty. The Pope declared willingly 'that he saw nothing in these decrees, which created so much noise, that could be regarded as an attack on Episcopal powers; that he intended to uphold them, as far as regarded the teaching of the Seminaries, but that he made no pretensions to impose congregations on the French Government which were prohibited by French laws; and Cardinal de Latil, Archbishop of Rheims, was charged to inform his venerable colleagues that 'His Holiness, persuaded of the boundless devotion of the French Bishops towards his Majesty, and also of their desire for peace, and for all other real interests of religion, had caused the answer to be sent, that the Bishops ought to trust to the great piety and wisdom of the King for the execution of the decrees, and to act in accordance with the Throne.'

I shall not say a word about the impeachment that was hurled, June 18, after much hesitation, and many menaces and retreatings, at the flitting shadow of the routed Ministry of M. de Villèle. It was in fact only a whim of the Extreme Left, a sort of *olla podrida* of all the pamphlets, articles, and diatribes which for the last two or three years had been exposed to public gaze in the drinking-shops and on the bookstalls everywhere.

The putative father of this warlike instrument during a time of peace was a poor sort of a man called Labbey de Pompières, who had naturally nothing of the Abbé about him but a similarity in the name, and who had no personal merit beyond that of being the father-in-law, or the grandfather-in-law, it does not matter which, of Odilon Barrot; but that was enough to give some consistency to the inclination which he felt to do something in order to be something. There was no common sense in this. It would have been as just and wise to have attacked the Villèle Ministry when it was in power and was dragging us rapidly backwards to the counter-revolution, as it was now absurd and puerile to claim to turn its faults into high treason; it was doing M. de Villèle much honour, and at the same time playing into his hands. All of us, that is, all the Left Centre, endeavoured to convince our friends of the



Left of the truth of this ; but if we succeeded in bringing on the storm, we failed to dissipate it. 'One must always threaten,' so used to say the important personages of the party, in their loud voices. 'The sword of Damocles must be suspended over the head of the enemy.' But, besides that, in the too probable case of the thread breaking, the blow inflicted would and could only be a harmless one, such swords are held by no ordinary threads. And so it happened, one fine morning, that at the close of a debate on the disbanding of the National Guard—the great crime of the enemy—the said Labbey de Pompières only took advice of himself, and, without any warning, laid his indictment on the table.

We were thunderstruck, and especially so our present Ministry ; for what was to be done ? To oppose the accusation would be to follow suit with the Right, and to present M. de Villèle with a triumphant acquittal, which would set him up again. To admit it would be to follow suit with the Left, to become responsible for its folly, and to share its almost inevitable humiliation.

However, a choice had to be made.

The Ministry (ours, I mean) took a neutral attitude, and maintained it, thanks to the eloquence, the

address and the moderation of M. de Martignac ; I never admired him more. This ground was not acceptable to the majority of the Chamber (I mean of the Chamber of Deputies). It admitted the proposal, whilst enraged at doing so, but only admitted it to be examined, and to this end appointed a tripartite committee, which could hardly arrive at any result. For the Left, Mauguin and Benjamin Constant ; for the Left Centre, Girod de l'Ain ; for the Right Centre, Raudot, Delalot, Agier ; for the Right, Montbel, Dutertre, Lamezan. Amongst these hardly anyone but M. de Montbel was really favourable to M. de Villèle, and those of the Right Centre were his personal still more than his political enemies.

But once appointed, it remained to be seen what the committee would do ; what its attitude would be ; what rights and powers it would claim as its attributes ; how, in default of any pre-existing legislation and of any precedent, it would manage to give authority to its orders, and pretend to regard them as earnest.

It was much embarrassed in this matter, so much so that the day, I think, after the first sitting, Girod de l'Ain came to call on me, backed up by Sebastiani, to beg me to come to their aid, and to draw up a plan of conduct for them, on the model of that of England.

They felt still more hampered when I told them that they were only a committee like any other, with neither more nor less power ; that it was no part of their duty to sit as *juges-instructeurs* ; to issue orders or warrants, to examine on oath ; to assume the right to seize State or private papers—in a word, to do any judicial act ; that they could only decide on facts already known ; only receive voluntary depositions or declarations ; that, in a word, they could, if they thought fit, bring their indictment before the House of Peers, which alone was qualified to commit any judicial act, properly so-called. They would not believe me, when I told them that in England the House of Commons had not for many years claimed the right of examining on oath.

This, at the same time, pleased and troubled my questioners very much ; it pleased them very much in this way, that they were free to act according to their own will, but at the risk and peril of being alone of their mind, and of not finding anyone who would feel bound to follow their injunctions ; it troubled them very much, because they had relied on discovering something in order to be able to cut a figure ; they heard several voluntary witnesses, but these knew no more about the matter than did the committee itself ; they addressed themselves to the Government, in order

to obtain certain documents, but the Government excused itself politely; in short, the unfortunate committee only succeeded, after very many efforts, in putting some questions to itself, without being able to obtain a majority among its members in any of the replies; it came and made a piteous confidential revelation to the Chamber, begging to be replaced; the Chamber put off its own answer, and the end of the Session got everyone out of this unpleasant position.

After due reflection, I took no share in the debate on a tolerably important and very difficult question, namely, that of deciding who should have the last word, the Court of Cassation or the Royal Courts, when there should arise between them a persistent and repeated contradiction on any point of law or of form. The Bill proposed by the Government gave the preference to the Royal Courts, a decision which could not be logically supported; on the other hand, it seemed contrary to principles to make the Court of Cassation, in any case, the final judge in every matter. It was a subject on which I had reflected for a long time. But the result of my reflections having been contrary to those very principles on which our system of cassation is founded, and as, in this matter, my conclusions went much further than the question which was incidentally mooted, I

should have found myself, had I intervened, placed between temerity and timidity; temerity, had I followed out my idea; timidity, had I stopped half-way. I therefore preferred to let things go, without mixing myself up with them: *Sinere mundum ire sicut it*, as Panurge says, reserving to myself to treat the matter fully in our *Revue française*. I had a short treatise *ex professo* inserted, under this title: *De l'interprétation des lois*, a treatise which I take the liberty of recommending to amateurs in judicial organization, if any such exist. In my time some were still to be found.

Amongst the foreign events which were wanting neither in importance nor in interest must be mentioned the war between Russia and the Porte—a war whose origin, if not its motives, went further back than the troubles in Greece, which were but the pretext for it. It was hard to say which of the two had the better or the worse cause. The grievances of the Porte were the most real; those of Russia the most apparent. Humanity pleaded for the latter; policy for the former. Fortune itself seemed to share the doubt of public opinion, at any rate in this first campaign, the beginning of which was so brilliant and the termination so disastrous for the Russians. We were with them heart and soul, and this feeling went even so far that

our ambassador, M. de Mortemart, accompanied the Emperor Nicholas at the head of his army. On the other hand, M. de Metternich ostentatiously washed his hands of it all as being a neutral, and rubbed them not less ostentatiously when the Russians were beaten.

Our expedition to the Morea, which sailed from France on August 17, and arrived within sight of Navarino on the 29th, was preceded by a swarm of volunteers of every age, rank, and condition, who flocked in hot haste under the flag of Odyssea or of Colocotronis in default of our own. The expedition ran no risk of meeting with any real resistance. We were not, strictly speaking, at war with the Porte. We were in that intermediate state which belonged to our time, where diplomacy went on its way with the staff of Popilius in its hand. The convention of Alexandria forced Ibrahim Pasha to hand the fortified places over to us, to re-embark his troops, and to leave the field clear for us; but General, soon afterwards Marshal, Maison did not succeed in persuading our good friends the Turks, and our better friends the Egyptians, to conform to the terms of the treaty of July 15 without great difficulty, much hesitation, many interchanges of views, and even exchange of shots, fired without any set purpose.

But what a pleasure it was to hear our King (and he was indeed our King in this case) say to his army :

‘SOLDIERS,—I am entrusting you with a great and noble mission. You are called upon to put a stop to the oppression of a great and of a famous people. This enterprise, which is an honour to France, which all generous hearts applaud, opens to you a glorious career which you well know how to fulfil. The feelings and the ardour which animate you are to me a guarantee that you will do your duty.

‘For the first time since the thirteenth century, our colours, which are now those of the liberator, appear on the shores of Greece. Soldiers, the dignity of the Crown, the honour of your country, look for fresh deeds of glory from you. In whatever position the course of events may place you, you will never forget that such great interests have been confided to your care.’

How far removed was this language from that of M. de Villèle, when, in his snuffing voice, he returned this answer to our committee : ‘But what interest can you take in that place ?’

That place was Athens and the Parthenon !

A short time afterwards, the last of our army evacuated the Spanish territory, leaving that unhappy country a prey to the tyranny which we had established, or rather re-established there, and which had paid us

for it as tyrants usually pay, and as those deserve to be paid who protect them ; it had been impossible to obtain, either from Ferdinand VII. or from his supporters, the slightest consideration for those unfortunate Liberals whom he had only conquered with our help and under our flag, which this time had shown itself to be anything but a flag of deliverance ; it was still less possible to obtain from them the slightest regard for our justest claims, and the worst of it was, that the same thing happened at Lisbon, in spite of the efforts of the English Government. The storm of counter-revolution which we had let loose in the Peninsula had overthrown the weak edifice which Dom Pedro, under the auspices of the Cabinet of St. James's, had erected, and the English army, when it withdrew, left, just as ours did, the Liberal Party at the mercy of a petty tyrant, whom its influence had failed to master. Dom Miguel reigned as gloriously and as benevolently as Ferdinand VII., but at least England, who had done nothing towards putting him on his petty throne, and who only wished to make an insignificant Prince Consort of him, was not, like we were, responsible for his crimes and misdeeds.

It is difficult to say what Canning would have done, had he been alive, to prevent a counter-revolution in



Portugal, which destroyed, if not his work, at any rate a state of affairs which he had approved and seconded, which he had even promised to protect against the reaction of which we were, unfortunately, the authors in Spain; but what his successor, the Duke of Wellington, did, is very easily told: he did nothing, and did not seem to trouble himself at all about the matter.

Altogether, he did not seem to value Mr. Canning's legacy, and he was not slow in showing it; for he rather roughly seized the first opportunity which presented itself of expelling (that is the only fit word to use) from his Administration the little knot of Liberal-Tories whom he had at first consented to retain. He began with the most illustrious amongst them: Mr. Huskisson, on the futile plea of a very slight irregularity of parliamentary tactics, the result of an inadvertence, which Mr. Huskisson was the first to acknowledge, and for which also he was the first to apologise. From that time, the whole Ministry was purely Tory, and the English policy completely changed its tone. However, the Ministry only half succeeded in its lobster-like policy (if, as a matter of fact, a lobster does go backwards); it was obliged to put up with the abolition of the Test Act, that insult to good sense and to morals, the avowed consequences of which were to force anyone

seeking a public appointment, great or small, to commit perjury; and if the House of Lords willingly lent to the Duke of Wellington their shoulder against Catholic emancipation, Peel, who was then the Duke's coadjutor, did not succeed in checking the triumphant progress of the Bill proposed by Sir Francis Burdett. The House of Commons took it in charge, and did not let go of it again. Peel had no greater success in preventing the election of the Great Agitator in Ireland, in the teeth of a law then in force, of the Parliament up in arms, and of the hero of Waterloo; and would to God that both of them had been utterly beaten this time, for it would have spared them the unpleasantness of having, later on, to make, so to speak, a humble apology, and of proposing themselves a measure which they had loudly declared to be the 'abomination of desolation,' and the ruin of their country—a detestable example, which has been followed only too often since.

Whilst I was living quietly at Broglie, which was now in a fit state to offer us a modest but comfortable residence, surrounded by my young family and my old friends, and resting a little from the fatigues of a session which had been made more laborious by internal intrigues, and by the difficulty of keeping the *disjecta membra* of our majority together, than by the struggles

in the tribune, a great misfortune was threatening me, without my being the least aware of it. My mother, my excellent mother, who had hardly entered into her sixtieth year, whose health had never caused us the least anxiety, found that she was suffering from a malady about which she spoke to no one, and indeed I scarcely believe that she herself realized her true state. I was informed of it by M. d'Argenson, who came to see us at the beginning of the autumn. His friends of the Left and I, who was on good terms with them, had succeeded in getting him elected deputy for the Eure department, where he had never resided, and where he did not possess an inch of ground. As he knew nobody there, he had taken advantage of the interval between the two sessions (1828-1829) to pay a round of visits and of thanks; he then spoke to me rather anxiously about the state of my mother's health; he promised to write to me fully on his return to Paris, and also that he would induce my mother to consult M. Lerminier, who was then our friend, even more than our medical adviser. At that period, the latter was the most celebrated successor of Dr. Corvisart, and that eminent physician himself had recommended Dr. Lerminier's services to the Emperor Napoleon during the Russian campaign.

M. d'Argenson kept his word to me ; Lerminier wrote me a long letter ; neither of them seemed to me to be reassured, although the nature of the malady was not absolutely certain. On October 18, that is to say the day after I received the two letters, I started for Paris. I found my mother very weak and very much wasted, but quite unconcerned as regarded herself ; cheerful, and, as usual, taking an interest in everything ; the next day and the day after that she seemed to regain strength, under the influence of remedies, and there was nothing to threaten a near or certain danger. On the twenty-first, I dined alone with her in her own little room, as she found it too tiring to dine in the dining-room ; she was better than the day before, and dined lightly but with a good appetite. About half-past nine, the time at which she usually retired, she took leave of me, and asked me to come and breakfast with her the next morning. It was a fine night, and I walked on the boulevards till about 11 o'clock. I was hardly in bed when M. d'Argenson sent for me. I hastily dressed and went as quickly as ever I could, and found my poor mother stretched on her bed without movement or respiration. According to what I was told, when she had reached her room, according to her custom, she had knelt down

to say her prayers, and had undressed herself and gone to bed. When she was there she said to her maid : ‘ Raise my head, and shake up my pillow ;’ and when that was done, she put her head back on the pillow, closed her eyes, and breathed her last—without a sigh, without pain, like a child going to sleep.

I spent the greater part of the night with M. d’Argenson, in the drawing-room, which opened into the bedroom. He insisted that Madame de Lascours should not be disturbed, and she was very much distressed at this the next morning ; but, however quickly she might have come down, she could not have received our poor mother’s last breath.

I only stayed a few days in Paris, painfully busied with still more painful details, and, as soon as possible, I again joined my wife and children. My sisters and my brothers, and all those of our relations whom this sad event had brought together, also dispersed with broken hearts. Never was the mother of a family more, and more deservedly, regretted.

I felt the blow too much to be able to pay any attention to political events, towards the close of the year. I devoted those two months to thoughts and duties which were more in harmony with the state of my mind.

## III.

1829.

WE did not return to Paris till just before the Session began. It was opened January 27. I had nothing to do with the conferences which preceded it, whether or not these conferences possessed the degree of importance and the weight which M. de Vaulabelle was pleased to attribute to them. Indeed, according to his version, there had arisen in the Left of the Chamber of Deputies a new party composed of anxious and impatient members who were burning to come into their share of power in the Martignac Ministry, and who had nearly come to an understanding with the chief Ministers. M. de Martignac was to resign the Ministry of the Interior in favour of M. Casimir Perier; and M. de la Ferronays the portfolio of Foreign Affairs to M. Hyde de Neuville, who would be replaced at the Admiralty by General Sebastiani. The Direction of Worship amongst non-Catholic bodies would be given to Benjamin Constant; that of the Post Office, or that

B. ROLL & DENNIS THIN  
DOCTRINE WOULD TAKE EVEN AS

of *contributions indirectes* (indirect taxation) to M. Duvergier de Hauranne. Twelve new peerages were to be created, the prospective recipients of which were M. Alexandre de Lameth, M. Lafitte, M. Ternaux, General Gérard, M. Thiard, the Duc de Bassano, Benjamin Delessert, Louis, etc., etc. As far as I am concerned, I doubt very much whether these dreams, if they really ever existed, went beyond a very small *coterie*, and that they even were entertained anywhere except in the midst of that *coterie*, such as it was. If the Ministry had felt inclined to strengthen itself a little it would rather have addressed itself to the Left Centre, than to the Left; but it possessed neither strength nor courage enough to mention to the King either the names of M. Royer-Collard, M. Molé, or my own. As far as I know, none of us had the slightest overtures made to him on this matter; none of us thought about it; it was all mere gossip.

There were some circumstances, however, which rather added to this state of anxious indecision of men's minds, to this vague apprehension, which generally precedes the opening of a Session. M. de la Ferronnays, who had been to the baths of Carlsbad to try and recover his health, had scarcely returned and taken possession of his post, than he fainted in the

King's private room, and it was necessary to grant him a further leave of absence for three months, more with the object of not dispensing with his presence in the Council than in the hope of being able to retain him there. Considering the state of our affairs, it was a real and great loss. M. de la Ferronnays was almost what M. de Richelieu had been ; he was a real gentleman and a real Minister, Liberal more as a matter of honour and from his heart than as a matter of doctrine ; he had equal weight with the Left and with the Court ; nobody dared to refuse placing confidence in him ; when he succumbed a large gap opened, which made room for a rival who had no resemblance to him.

When I say rival, I am wrong ; and when I say I am wrong, I am not altogether right. M. de la Ferronnays and M. de Polignac were friends ; the Minister, far from treating the ambassador badly, supported him loyally, to the best of his ability, against the rest of the Ministry ; but the King was dying to get rid of that particular Ministry ; and as he looked out for confidential men to consult on the matter, he naturally inclined towards a name which recalled to him the happiest recollections of his youth, and which besides had real claims on his gratitude. I do not mean to assert that in this M. de Polignac was in



agreement with his kind master; but whether it was mere haphazard or the result of a preconcerted arrangement, when he was seen to fall, so to speak, from the clouds into Paris, which he had only just left, at the very moment when M. de la Ferronnays was having a fit of apoplexy, and when it was known—a fact which very soon transpired—that his leave had been imperatively granted him by the King, and unknown to the other Ministers, through M. Portalis, who temporarily held the portfolio of Foreign Affairs, it became quite clear that the King, M. de Polignac and M. Portalis were hand in hand, or that the post of First President of the Court of Cassation, which was then vacant, or about to become so, was the stake for which M. Portalis was playing. Rightly or wrongly, everyone was the more convinced of this when M. de Polignac made a speech in our Chamber, which doubtless served him very well, but which had no real aim, in which he professed his ardent faith in Liberalism, and when the Tory English newspapers were found to be vying with each other in their eulogies of, and in their regrets for, the ambassador who had so suddenly become so dear to our darling neighbours.

However that might be, the moment, if it was to come, had not yet arrived. The Ministry faced the

storm; the King favoured it so little that it could expect nothing from him, nor could it propose to him any new selection which might have settled it more firmly, and so it serried its ranks like a battalion under fire. M. Portalis was definitely appointed titular Minister of Foreign Affairs; M. Bordeau, Directeur Général de l'enregistrement, Under-Secretary of Justice, until such time as he could conveniently secure the Seals, which he could scarcely fail to obtain if anybody obtained anything, and the Session was opened without anyone having a majority, and with the King anxiously waiting for his revenge on us.

A Bill which related to municipal elections, and which was drawn up in a most liberal spirit, was thrown out for want of support from the Liberal Party in the Chamber.

Our Session died a natural death on July 31. The Ministry and the Chambers separated to meet no more; on both sides this feeling was more than a presentiment. As usual, we took leave of each other crying, 'Vive le roi!' but no one really said so in his heart.

The most sensible men appointed to meet again at the death-struggle, and, later on, at the interment of the Monarchy.

The anonymous, or pseudonymous, author of the 'Annuaire Historique' characterised all the consequences of this last Session very well and in very few words :

'The Ministry appeared with a Bill which only found favour for a moment, and lost it many of its friends. . . . It had, at first, flattered itself that it would preserve the support of the Left, out of gratitude for the Bills which it had proposed to it the previous year, and that it would then obtain a solid majority in the two Centres, like under the Decazes Ministry ; but political parties will hardly allow themselves to give way to feelings of gratitude, unless it be to obtain more. The fraction which detached itself from the Right made no conquests there, and the Left Centre, carried away by its engagements, deceived by misconceptions, or made angry by a resistance the reason of which was not fully understood, did not dare to yield to the Ministry.

'Hence sprang that mutual mistrust, that cavilling spirit, that incertitude and variation in the party votes, which was felt after the two famous Bills were withdrawn until after the end of the Session. No party, except the Right, was at its ease, nor was even in its proper position, and the Ministers, who had just lost the majority which alone enabled them to resist Court

influences, reduced to making liberal protestations from the Tribune, and to defending measures which the Council imposed upon them, were thenceforward, in spite of their talents, incapable of fulfilling their mission.

‘ From the struggle which took place over the departmental and municipal administration, party irritation extended to the question of the endowment of the peerage, the supplementary credits, and to the vast arena of the Budget, and nothing is more remarkable than to see how this irritation is manifested even in the House of Peers, which is usually so calm, and which one would believe to be sheltered from all variations of the political barometer.

‘ It has been said a hundred times that this Session produced no important results, and nevertheless, the Opposition benches were congratulating themselves on the advantages which they imagined they had gained; on the one hand, in having for ever set aside the principle of election in the public administration; on the other, in having established a kind of civil responsibility on the part of the Ministers, by refusing to vote a sum which had been expended without sufficient authority; in having obtained fresh guarantees for economy, and in having laid down the principle that

every contract which carried any subsidy or expense with it should necessarily come under the control of the Chamber.

‘We neither wish to discuss nor to decide on the merits of or the foundation for these claims. It is enough for us to observe that after so many debates, after this struggle which was a compound of success and of defeat, of small pleasures and great vexations, of lofty pretensions and bitter disappointments, the various parties and the Ministry came out of the Session, fatigued, harassed, very little satisfied with the present state of affairs, and very uneasy as to the future.’

It was only with great difficulty that I could wait for the end of the Session. My physicians sent me, for the third time, to the Pyrenean watering-places. A nervous asthma had succeeded an affection of the throat, of which they had thoroughly cured me, and which was so troublesome that it only rarely allowed me to spend a whole night in bed. When I arrived at Canterets with all my little family, I found many people that I knew there, and amongst them M. de Chateaubriand, who had come from Rome on May 27, in the hope of exchanging his embassy for the portfolio of a Minister, and who had left Paris again July 24, after

having been rather unceremoniously dismissed by the King, our master.

A Ministerial change was certainly about to take place, but M. de Chateaubriand was to have no share in the spoil. On July 27, the day but one after his departure, and almost on the eve of the close of the Session, M. de Polignac had had a private audience of the King at St. Cloud. It was not known, except by hearsay, what was brewed there, or what was proposed to the Ministry in power, what was accepted by some and refused by the others; but at any rate, a week after this clandestine audience, on August 8, a decree appeared in the *Moniteur*, countersigned by the late Keeper of the Seals, M. Bourdeau, which nominated: M. de Polignac Minister for Foreign Affairs; M. de la Bourdonnaie to the Interior; M. de Bourmont to the War Office; M. de Montbel (M. de Villèle's right hand man) to the Ministry of Public Instruction; and, in order to soften the first effects of this blow, M. Courvoisier was appointed to the Seals, M. de Rigny to the Admiralty, and (after M. Roy had refused the appointment) M. de Chabrol to the Exchequer.

We had done a fine stroke of business; it was our recompense, and one which we well deserved.

M. de Rigny, who was in Paris, refused to take office.

The consent of M. de Montbel and of M. Courvoisier, who were absent, was taken for granted. The Ministry was still only provisional, but the Rubicon had been crossed, or, in other language, the dangerous plunge had been taken.

That fatal copy of the *Moniteur* of August 8, 1829, was quickly circulated throughout the whole of France; it can easily be imagined what a mingled cry of consternation and of indignation it aroused; men who lived at that period have not forgotten it. The astonishment which it excited was real, and it might have been said that the event was unexpected; but nevertheless, for more than a year nothing else had been spoken about, and daily the different parties hurled either the menace, or the defiance of it, at each other's heads. But we are so constituted in this fair France of ours. Men rush into an undertaking, with their eyes wide open, just for the pleasure of the thing; the inconvenience, the hazard, the peril, are foreseen; and even more, the facts are closely looked at, weighed, calculated; and then, when the moment is come, and one finds one's self face to face with them, one is inclined to throw the whole thing up. 'Nothing in this world,' I said once in the House of Peers, 'is so rare as to know one's own mind; nothing is so difficult as to

really wish what one wishes. To wish what one wishes, is to wish the thing that one wishes with all its good or bad, agreeable or disastrous conditions. To know one's own mind, is to accept without a murmur all the disagreeables of the part which one has chosen.'

This cry of distress was uttered as loudly by the patients who were taking the waters at Cauterets as anywhere else, and to speak truly, the most fervent Royalists were amongst their number. Amongst others, I remember that the Duc de Fitz-James was even immoderately excited. M. de Chateaubriand proved himself to be more reserved, and this fact was remarked upon. Up to that time, his opposition had been very damaging and bitter, as indeed it usually was, but when, by the overbearing conduct of the new Ministry, he found that he was driven into a corner—I mean that he was reduced to the alternative of either joining the *ultra-ultras* or of resigning his embassy—he hardly knew what to say or to do, and became more morose and ill-tempered than ever. Ill-natured people were pleased at this; they vied with each other in recalling to his mind his most recent utterances, in harassing him with premature congratulations, in discussing him before his own face as a man who had been voluntarily disgraced, so that at last he could not endure it any



longer, and one fine morning we learnt that during the night he had left us.

I was not on such intimate terms with him as to warrant my asking him for his secret; nor was I sufficiently hostile to him to obtain it from him by surprise; but, as soon as I knew that he had gone, I felt no doubt that I should find that he had joined our party in Paris. The pressure brought to bear on him was too strong to allow of his continuing to vacillate. The *Journal des Débats*, which was his bulwark or his arsenal, had hoisted the black flag without waiting for his word of command; his burly friend Bertin (it was thus he used to designate him) was being prosecuted, and on the point of being imprisoned; resignations were being sent in on all sides—Villemain, Salvandy, Alexandre de la Borde, Agier and twenty others set the example; newspapers of all shades of opinion, from the *Constitutionnel* down to the *Figaro*, were drawing the sword. He was thus obliged to join his small battalion and to follow the general movement, without, however, deluding himself, as he knew quite well that if he were to break with the Government altogether it would mean, when he was in Opposition, that his own importance would be reduced by one half, and that for the future he would have to follow instead of to lead;

this was the clearest and the worst fact in the whole mishap.

The position, and from that time the disposition of M. de la Fayette—his rival for the popularity of the day—was very different. Like him, M. de la Fayette had left Paris before the end of the Session. He heard the great news in Auvergne, which was his birthplace and the home of his family, in the midst of the festivities with which those of his relations who were still alive, his friends and the patriots of the district, vied to entertain him. It is therefore not surprising that it was from that quarter that, in the form of a toast given after dessert, emanated the first protest against the Polignac Ministry, more especially as the name sounded disagreeably in the Auvergnat ears of La Fayette, and as the high nobility of Puy en Velay had not left a very good memory behind them. It is not therefore surprising that M. de la Fayette was one of the first to take fire ; that the explosion of public indignation caused the grand days of his youth and the recollection of his white horse to flash across his eyes ; that being still under the impression of his triumphal progress through the United States, he felt inclined to renew the experiment, quite spontaneously, when travelling through Dauphiné, Lyonnais and Burgundy ; in this he

succeeded beyond all expectation ; he was received enthusiastically in the country, was cheered in the streets, escorts of horsemen accompanied his modest equipage, the municipal bodies greeted him with speeches, and illuminations were given in his honour in the towns through which he passed, whilst his name was loudly applauded at banquet after banquet ; nothing, in fact, was wanting to do him honour ; whilst at the same time, at the other extremity of France, in the heart of Brittany, the year 1789 seemed as if it were going to be revived even in a graver and more menacing form ; public associations were, in fact, being formed there, which called upon people to refuse to pay their taxes if the Charter were in any way attacked.

I read all the accounts greedily, and, so to say, uninterruptedly, during the whole of the season at Caunterets ; that, no doubt, caused me to reflect, but I must allow that it did not inspire me with enough apprehensions and regrets ; I was still heated by the political struggle, and I thought of nothing but of playing well my part in the coming crisis, and of keeping up a good heart under all circumstances.

The last months of 1829 had been too full of painful pre-occupations to allow me to remember anything else. I took no part in the political agita-

tions which were continually cropping up in France. Abroad, the year was fruitful in events which were worthy of interest; its course was signalised by the end of the war with Turkey, which was so glorious for Russia, and by the resolve which the Duke of Wellington's Ministry finally took, to range itself on the side of Catholic emancipation; it was indeed hardly worth while to object to Mr. Canning's accession to power to hasten the end of that illustrious and generous man, and to steep him in bitterness, and afterwards to come and sing a *palinodia* over his grave. My knowledge of those events is only such as can be found everywhere.

BOOK VII.  
SEVENTH PERIOD.

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I.

1830.

THE REVOLUTION OF JULY.

As our political existence is about to enter on a new phase, for the future I shall follow the destinies of our cause and of our country, step by step, according to its varying fortunes; I shall relate, exactly, I hope, sincerely, I am sure, the very small share which I had in the events of 1830; and I shall explain more fully the share which I had, rather later on, in the management of public affairs.

Between the 1st of January and the 2nd of March, the day on which the Chambers met, nothing happened to interrupt the continued progress of the Opposition throughout the whole of France, or to trouble the real or assumed tranquillity of the King, who kept himself intrenched behind his Ministry. He allowed himself

to wait for the storm, and even to defy it, exhibiting, with some liberality as far as the English Government was concerned, the preparations for that expedition to Algiers, which, according to him, would cover him with glory, strengthen his throne for ever, and place his prerogative beyond all discussion. Some rumours of instability in the Ministry were circulated without any other foundation than the wish of those who circulated or propagated them to see them realised, and had no ground in fact, except perhaps some degree of rivalry between M. de Polignac and M. de la Bourdonnaie. It was said that 'the one would have no equal, and the other no master,' but this rivalry existed more in appearance than in reality; because, if I have been well informed, the latter being possessed of far more foresight than the former, feeling that he was sliding down the incline, and foreseeing what an amount of temerity his part of royalist-demagogue must impose upon him, only looked for a decent outlet as a cover for his vanity. 'It was a most serious undertaking,' he said, after the event, 'and I wanted to hold the cards;' he left them, without much regret, as I think, to his pretended rival; M. de Montbel, who replaced him, whilst showing himself more modest, also proved himself to be more resolute.

This little hitch, however, did not bring about any change in the position of affairs. The Session was opened on the appointed day. The King's speech was doubly warlike : when he menaced the Dey of Algiers, he braved the English Government ; whilst holding out his hand to his people, he threw down his gauntlet to them.

Nobody was mistaken, or pretended to be mistaken ; not even the House of Peers, packed as it had recently been with M. de Villèle's partisans. In its address, it intimated respectfully no doubt, but clearly, as it had the right to do, that it held the prerogatives of the crown as responsible for the liberties of the nation. 'Placed under your safeguard,' it said to the King, 'those liberties are the bonds which attach Frenchmen to your throne and to your dynasty, and render them both necessary for them.'

No one, either in the Chamber or in the Cabinet, spoke in order to take up the insinuation. As for M. de Chateaubriand, he did not fail to explain it as fully as he could.

He had scarcely arrived in Paris when he was obliged to lay aside all reserve, and to comply with a good grace, that is to say, to send in his resignation as ambassador ; having done this, he was not the man to

stop there; the occasion for bringing himself into notice was too good for him to allow it to escape. He complained bitterly of all and everyone; by some he had been treated as an apostate, and by others as a renegade, 'by order or by permission,' as he added. What was the real meaning of those words? Who were the 'some' and who the 'others'? We did not trouble ourselves much about the matter, as we thought it very right that he should tell the King his mind; and the King, on his part, putting a good face on the matter, took the address in good part.

Indeed, the state of the Chamber of Deputies was such as not to warrant any other course on the part of the King. From the very first day, the Chamber played its cards in earnest; three of the five candidates for the Presidency belonged to the Left Centre, and two to that very small minority which was called the 'défection;' the rest of the *bureau* was similarly composed; two of its members belonged to the Left, and three to the Left Centre.

With much reluctance, the King was obliged to nominate M. Royer-Collard as President of the Chamber. Some difficulty was experienced in bringing to reason M. Labbey de Pompières, the *Président d'âge*, who wished to acquire fame on quitting the chair, by causing



a scene, in firing his shot without waiting for the word of command.

The Committee on the Address was chosen under the same impulse. Four were members of the Left, five of the Left Centre. The deputies had agreed to refuse their support to the Ministry, and on this point they were unanimous.

I was one of the first to be informed of this.

The committee having been appointed March 10, I was at the Tuileries on the evening of the 14th. It was one of those large gatherings which then, in the language of the Court, were called *appartements*, that is, drawing-room; by right or by custom, everybody was invited who held any official post anywhere. Under the Restoration, I was never invited to anything but to these sort of meetings. The Committee on the Address was there as well as I; and perhaps, *in petto*, the committee was the principal object of the gathering. The King, whether he already knew, or whether he only guessed what had been decided by the committee, made himself most agreeable, although, of course, we very well saw through his affected courtesy to us. Etienne, who had been unanimously appointed *rapporteur* the evening before, after having had his due share of these advances, bent forwards to me, and, laying his fingers on his lips,

recited to me in a low voice, word for word, the ominous paragraph which had been already settled and reduced to writing.

‘The intervention of the country in the discussion of public interests is consecrated by the Charter. The Charter has decided that the most complete harmony between the political views of your Majesty’s Government and the wishes of your people should be the indispensable condition of the regular course of public business. Our devotion to the throne compels us to tell you that such harmony does not at present exist.’

These were the terms in which the Address of the Chamber of Deputies answered the Speech from the Throne. The challenge was met: the Chamber was returning blow for blow. In this language, where pride vied with respect, and daring with moderation, it was easy to see where the shaft came from. None of the members of the committee, and least of all its *rapporteur*, a former imperial censor, was in a position or in a state to speak thus to royalty without lowering or offending it. The Commission needed a member like the patriot of 1789, the royalist of 1792, the reactionary, l’homme aux cloches de l’an V., the confidant of exiled legitimacy, the plebeian of 1814, who, when offered a title, answered: ‘Noble vous-même,’

like the old grognard of 1830, who reluctantly followed the chariot of the victor in the manner of the slave of old, now, not to remind him that he was a man, but to remind him that he was a king, crying out to him, 'Sursum!' whenever the victor seemed to give way before the storm.

M. Royer-Collard, as President of the Chamber, was a member of the committee on the address, and as such, though not presiding, he ruled, and whenever he gave his advice, such advice was characteristic of him who gave it.

When I left Etienne, I shook hands with him without saying a word, and late in the evening I returned home, satisfied in my inmost heart, but also more pensive and perplexed than I cared to acknowledge to myself.

The address was read on the 15th, and debated on the 16th, at a private sitting, that is to say, at a sitting to which the public was not admitted; but all the Deputies were in their places, to the number of over four hundred, and as there was an enormous crowd besieging all the avenues and the vestibules of the Palais Bourbon, at every moment information concerning every incident connected with the sitting was communicated to those outside.

The President having read the address, and emphasized the decisive paragraph in a tone of voice which

rather indicated the author of it, two or three speeches which did not amount to much more than an interchange of commonplaces were delivered, after which the new Minister of the Interior spoke, and resolutely attacked the questions, opposing, point blank, the pretension claimed by the Chamber of Deputies of making and unmaking Ministries at its own will and pleasure, qualifying such pretensions without any more reserve than was displayed in the address itself.

‘A single Chamber,’ he said, ‘would absorb the two other legislative powers; it would take upon itself the executive and the initiative of the laws, and would rule the army . . . . It was the deep-seated feeling of this truth which caused one of our colleagues, whom your late votes marked for the King’s appointment, to say with so much truth: “The day on which the Government will only exist by a majority of the Chamber, the day when it shall be established as a matter of fact, that the Chamber can turn out the King’s Ministers and force others on him, which will be its own Ministers and not those of the King, on that day, there will be an end, not merely of the Charter, but of that independent royalty which protected our fathers, and from which France received what liberties and happiness she ever enjoyed.”’

I was not present at the sitting, as no stranger was admitted. I cannot exactly say whether any cloud passed over the noble brow of the patriarch of that doctrine, at this question which had been dug out of his parliamentary juvenilia; but I think he put a good face on it. He must have been used to it; this was not the first time his dogmatism of yesterday was brought face to face with his dogmatism of to-day; but, such as he was, it must have been a very bitter draught for him to swallow, to see himself defended by Benjamin Constant, who took a malicious delight in doing so.

In this first encounter, the Ministry were the aggressors.

M. Guernon de Ranville, Minister of Public Instruction, whom nobody had ever heard speak before, and whose name was quite unknown, followed the Minister of the Interior. He took Benjamin Constant to task, attacked the Address vigorously and without mercy, and protested against any idea of a *coup d'état*, with a vivacity which quite savoured of enthusiasm; indeed he was then sincere; events, whatever they were, allow that justice to be done to him.

On our side, the replies were dull. The general impatience hardly permitted a hearing to be given to a

rising politician, M. de Chantelauze, who soon proved himself a master of debate; the new speaker, being less timid or more far sighted than his colleagues, at once demanded a monarchical fifth of September. 'Divide, divide!' was the cry from all the benches; 'the debate must be closed.' The request was complied with, much to the disappointment of those who had written speeches, for they had to keep them in their pockets.

The next day was the great one.

The first nine paragraphs of the address were very quickly got over, not however without offering M. de Polignac one or two opportunities of displaying his eloquence, in a truly entertaining manner.

When the tenth was reached, a member of the Right Centre, a serious, honourable and sensible man, proposed to substitute for that paragraph, relating to the want of harmony between the King's government and the Chamber the following amendment :

'However, our honour, our conscience and the fidelity which we have sworn and which we shall always preserve, forces us to tell your Majesty that, amidst the unanimous sentiments of respect and affection with which your people surround you, grave uneasiness prevails in consequence of the changes which have happened since the last Session. It is incumbent on our Majesty's

great wisdom to appreciate them, and to apply such remedies to them as you may think fit. The prerogatives of the crown place in its august hands the means of assuring that constitutional harmony which is as necessary for the strength of the throne, as for the happiness of France.

This amendment was regarded as having been concerted with M. Courvoisier, Minister of Justice, who, belonging to the Left Centre, had only, as he himself confessed, joined the Polignac Ministry in order to try and dissolve it, in order to prevent a conflict between the Crown and the country.

It is quite certain that he took care to be ill on the day of the debate, and this was remarked all the more because, seeing that he was a man of some oratorical power, he was reckoned upon to be the spokesman of this gathering of obscure or almost unknown mediocrities.

That amendment became the battlefield of the debate.

M. Guizot, who had just attained the age which was fixed by the Charter as that of political majority, and who made his first appearance in that tribune which he afterwards filled so gloriously, attacked the proposed amendment most vigorously ; M. Berryer, whose talent

deserves similar praise, did also the same thing, but in another way; he denounced the amendment as being identical with the paragraph itself, and as attacking the royal prerogatives, albeit in more respectful language. M. Berryer was more applauded by his side than was M. Guizot by his supporters; the Right, indeed, was more united, and those amongst its members who applauded were more noisy than the Left. The amendment was scarcely defended, and did not even obtain the honours of a division.

The rest is well known.

The whole of the address was adopted, March 16, at half-past six o'clock in the evening by a majority of 40—221 against 181—and presented to the King on the 18th, in the throne-room, with the usual ceremony.

Some of the members who were chosen by lot did not think that they ought to accept that mission; but several of their colleagues joined the deputation, which thus appeared more numerous than usual.

Amidst the singular embarrassment and the visible constraint which was depicted on the countenances of Ministers, courtiers, and deputies, actors in, or mere spectators of, that ceremony, M. Royer-Collard, whose duty it was as President of the Chamber to present the



address, read it in a solemn voice, visibly affected by emotion, especially towards the last paragraphs, and the King, who had listened to it calmly, replied to him as follows, in a voice in which the deepest emotion could be discerned under the affectation of royal dignity. The reply had been discussed beforehand in a council of Ministers.

‘ Sir, I have heard the address which you have read to me in the name of the Chamber of Deputies.

‘ I had a right to expect the co-operation of the two Chambers in order to accomplish all the good I intended ; I am grieved to see that, on their part, the Deputies of Departments tell me that this co-operation does not exist.

‘ Gentlemen, I announced my intention in my speech at the beginning of the Session : these resolutions are unchangeable ; the interests of my people forbid me to alter them.

‘ My Ministers shall inform you of my intentions.’

That scene was related to me at the entrance of the Tuileries, on his leaving the palace, by M. Gauthier of Bordeaux, himself one of the members of the Committee, and one who had come over to us from the Right. After having been, for a long time, the intimate friend of M. de Peyronnet, his fellow-country-

man, he had left the flag of the Right, to come and place himself under ours, without any personal interest, and from no other motive than that of honest and sincere conviction. Whilst relating this to me, with a certain amount of Southern excitement, he was filled with emotion without that emotion affecting his resolution.

The next day people crowded the galleries of the Chamber and witnessed the Minister of the Interior handing to the President of the Chamber of Deputies, a royal decree, proroguing the Session to September 1.

After the notice of the prorogation had been read amidst the deep silence and imposing calm, usual on impressive occasions, the President declared the Session closed. Some cries of 'Vive le Roi!' were uttered by the Right; some of 'Vive la Charte!' by the Left. A cry of 'Vive la Constitution!' was at the same time raised in the public gallery. Some members of the Right answered it by other cries of 'A bas les factieux!' and appealed to the authority of the President to have the galleries cleared; but he sensibly remarked that his authority had come to an end with the Session, and every one separated amidst the disorder consequent upon the wildest excitement.

It was just then, in the midst of all this tumult, that the King and Queen of Naples, who were passing

through France on their way to their own dominions, arrived in Paris and stayed there for a few days. They were coming from Spain, after having placed on the newly restored throne of that kingdom, and confided to the care of the 'Bluebeard,' who disported himself upon that throne, the Princess Christina, as his fourth or fifth wife, I do not know which. Their presence in Paris was the pretext for a series of rejoicings which contrasted strangely with the agitation of men's minds and with the confusion of public affairs. Nothing was left undone to entertain them well. The most remarkable of these fêtes was that given to them by the Duke and Duchess of Orleans, at the Palais Royal; everything was Neapolitan there, so much so that, at the close of the fireworks, Salvandy approaching the master of the house on tip-toe, was quite justified in remarking to him, in a low voice :

'Please your Royal Highness, the illusion is perfect, and every body does his best to maintain it; we may fancy ourselves at the foot of Vesuvius, and dancing, on the eve of an eruption.'

Indeed the eruption was not long in coming !

On May 16, on the return of the Dauphin, the same day on which the Algerian expedition started from Toulon, the Chamber of Deputies was dissolved.

The Electoral Colleges for the 'arrondissements' were summoned for July 3, those for the Departments for July 20, and the opening of the Session, was fixed for August 1.

Three days after this party manœuvre, M. Courvoisier, Minister of Justice, and M. de Chabrol, Minister of Finance, sent in their resignations.

This is what I have found in one of my letters :

' Paris, July 23.

' The wind still seems to threaten a *coup d'état*, but that will only be resorted to after the meeting of the Chambers, and the follies which are expected from the Chamber of Deputies. This delay is so far good, for it may be hoped that the Chamber will not commit any follies ; in any case, I think the greatest folly would be the *coup d'état* itself. I cannot tell you how pleased I was with the general spirit in the department of the Eure, with that mixture of good sense and of resolution which I met with everywhere. The elections have been carried on wonderfully, cleverly and firmly, and with no *arrière pensée*. I am quite certain that in case of a *coup d'état* the refusal to pay taxes would be prompt and universal, that this measure would be carried out without disorder, and that its success would be certain.

However, I should much prefer that things did not come to that.

26th. 'The *Moniteur* of this morning will tell you our position. The idea of a *coup d'état* never seemed further off. What are we going to do? I cannot tell; to-morrow I shall have seen somebody. At the present moment I can only go out to run about. So we are in full revolution. Come as soon as you can, we must not be separated now.

27th. 'Everything is still very quiet here. Yesterday the police tried to organise an artificial disturbance, but they gained nothing for their trouble; everybody looked on and shrugged their shoulders. We are expecting the absent peers and deputies in order that we may deliberate and concert measures.

28th. 'Everything here is in the greatest state of confusion, but there is no danger unless one goes in search of it. Up to the present time nothing has been done but to fire shots into the air.

29th. 'I have sent G—— to direct you. You can only come on foot because of the barricades. The two days through which we have just passed have been grand and glorious. I have run no risks, but the difficulties which present themselves in getting out of the situation are tremendous; to disarm the people now,

and to make them support Charles X., is perhaps a more difficult undertaking than that which the people themselves have just achieved.'

My correspondence terminated with the arrival of my family in Paris ; these short extracts have only the advantage of bringing the impressions of each moment vividly before the mind. I will now take up the course of events *seriatim*, only laying stress on what I personally saw or did.

The result of the elections was overwhelming. Out of 428 Deputies, the Opposition had returned 270, and the Government 145, a majority of 125 ; but it must always be borne in mind that each claimed and looked upon the 13 votes of Lorgieril's amendment as belonging to them.

Ever since July 4, the Ministers had been consulting as to what decision they should take: *pro forma* they offered their resignations, which were also refused *pro forma*. The next day the first deliberations upon the *coup d'état* took place solely between the Ministers ; M. Guernon de Ranville resisted, and M. de Peyronnet hesitated. On July 7, a decision was arrived at in the presence of the King and the Dauphin ; the preliminary arrangements were entrusted to the joint care of M. de Chantelauze and M. de Peyronnet. On the

9th, the French army entered the town of Algiers itself.

At that news, as the moment seemed to have come to prepare for the worst, I got all my political friends who were residing in, or passing through Paris, together at my house; peers, deputies, either already elected or about to be so, literary men, and men of the world, barristers, journalists; there were between forty and fifty of us. It was unanimously agreed, that the first answer to the *coup d'état* with which we were threatened should be an energetic appeal to all to refuse to pay the taxes, an appeal to be made through all channels of publicity. That would be acting vigorously on the defensive; it would be defying the government to prosecute us, and giving public indignation time to explode.

But what was to happen if it followed up its point?

What Hampden did in 1640.

And if popular indignation resorted to arms what was to be done?

What Hampden did a year later.

But we had not got as far as that yet. Every day brings its work and trouble, and fresh facts require fresh counsel.

Meanwhile the Government was playing a close game.

The sessions was to open on August 1, and the Ministry made a display of all the preparations which that solemnity rendered necessary. The newspapers were not silent with regard to the Bills which were already drawn up, or reforms which had been, or were to be made; the official letters summoning the presence of the members of both Chambers, had already been sent out; I had received mine which I am sorry I did not keep; several of my colleagues did not receive theirs till the day after the catastrophe. There was no military display, no movement of troops either in Paris or the neighbourhood, the titular Minister of War, M. de Bourmont, was triumphing in Algeria, and making the last of the Barbarossas give up his treasures and clear out of the place; his temporary *alter ego*, M. de Champagny, who knew nothing of anything, favourite though he was of the Dauphin's, was enjoying his holiday in the neighbourhood of the Capital. The Duke of Ragusa, one of the four major generals of the guard, and the very one who happened to be on duty, was squabbling with Arago, at the Academy of Sciences, and did not know that the command of the garrison of the Seine was reserved for him, in case the *coup d'état* should end in a *coup de main*. Everything was tranquil outside and on the surface, discussions were quietly indulged in, and



thus we got to July 25, that is to say to the eve of the day which was to have no morrow for the restored Monarchy.

M. de Vaulabelle has given such a faithful and dramatic account of that 25th of July, that I cannot resist borrowing it from him *in extenso* :

‘The chateau of St. Cloud, the residence of Charles X., used to receive every Sunday a certain number of visitors, who were attracted by the desire of showing themselves to the King, and of paying their court to him. The concourse was not greater on that day than usual. Amongst the number of political personages whom the habit of doing their duty to the prince had attracted, as much as a feeling of vague disquietude, which for a month had kept the political public and the official world in a state of great alarm, there was a man who had played an important part during the early portion of the Restoration : Baron de Vitrolles. Two days before, in a long audience which he had of the King, to thank him for the special letters patent in which were set forth the particular services which justified his late elevation to the peerage, M. de Vitrolles had found Charles X. completely silent about the measures he intended to employ to overcome the difficulties of the situation . . . . he wished several

times to lead the conversation on to the nature and the merits of the measures which the circumstances demanded, by himself developing a plan of resistance which depended on the royalist forces of the East and South of France; but each time Charles X. either turned the conversation, or said nothing. M. de Vitrolles arrived at St. Cloud still under the influence of the doubts and the uneasiness which he had carried away from that interview. In the King's study, which served as a Council Chamber, he found M. de Polignac and his colleagues, and ten or twelve others. The faces of the Ministers, and that of the King himself, who soon appeared in order to go to mass, showed a certain amount of preoccupation. Charles X. only stopped for a few minutes. Twelve o'clock struck, and he went towards the chapel, followed by M. de Polignac and M. de Montbel; the greater number of the Ministers remained in the Council Chamber; M. de Vitrolles remained likewise, and successively addressed M. de Chantelauze, M. Capelle, and M. de Guernon-Ranville, limiting himself as far as concerned the two former, to a few vague phrases about the gravity of the circumstances, and the skill and the precautions which the remedy it was wished to apply required. With the Minister of Public Instruction he was more explicit.

‘I do not ask you for your secret,’ he said to him ; ‘but I must tell you that the fate of the monarchy is at stake. Perhaps you are deceived by the difference of the times. A measure which you might have carried easily at the formation of the Ministry, and even six months ago, has become impossible in the present state of effervescence of public opinion, and would inevitably have the most fatal, the most incalculable, results.’

Six months previously M. de Vitrolles had unfolded to M. de Montbel a series of measures, whose object, as he said, was to check the Monarchy on its way down the revolutionary decline, along which it was being dragged. Being ruled by the idea of that difference in the times which he had just quoted against the projects, the mere attempt at which he feared in the present state of men’s minds, and being anxious to warn M. de Montbel against his former appreciations, at least with regard to such of them as may have seemed too absolute or too rash, he went into the public gallery.

Wide corridors put this gallery in communication with the chapel and the King’s gallery. A hundred and fifty or two hundred people, grouped opposite these openings with the apparent intention of hearing Mass, were standing up and talking almost aloud, being busily engaged in discussing anything else but the office which

had just concluded, when M. de Vitrolles arrived and joined M. de Montbel. They both went towards the Council Chamber, going before the King, who was delayed by the kind demonstrations and the remarks he addressed to the persons whom he passed on his way.

‘I have no right to penetrate the secrets of the Council,’ said M. de Vitrolles to the Minister of Finance, ‘but I must warn you against the delusions which always surround men who are possessed of great power. To-day the situation is no longer the same as it was some months ago. Public opinion is prepared; any act of vigour, even though it might be legal, would encounter a ready resistance. Not only have your opponents counted their numbers and organised themselves, but your friends have no longer the same confidence in your power and in your skill; you may run the risk of finding yourselves unsupported.’

M. de Montbel listened, and only replied by a few vague words which had not much significance. His interlocutor and he soon arrived in the large study. M. de Vitrolles, then seeing M. de Peyronnet, left M. de Montbel, and, accosting the former colleague of M. de Villèle, and pointing to the table at which the Ministers were going to take their places, he said :

‘I hear you are soon going to settle the fate of the

Monarchy. I have several times been summoned to the Privy Council without having asked to be so ; to-day, however, I shall ask it.'

'But you know better than anyone else that the debates of the Privy Council have never done any good,' M. de Peyronnet answered.

At this moment the King came in again ; all who were present, at once ranged themselves, as was usual in a semicircle, and, as was his habit, Charles X. as he passed, addressed a few words to each of them individually. His face was more serious than it had been before ; at the end of ten minutes, all strangers retired, and the King remained alone with his Ministers.

'Amongst the number of political personages who had just left the royal study was the Marquis de Sémonville, Grand Référendaire of the House of Peers, a man of a supple and shrewd character, who had been courtier of all the Governments of France since 1789, and who, having escaped from every shipwreck, discovered the art of increasing his fortune in every storm. He called on M. de Vitrolles the evening before, hoping to be let into his confidence with regard to the Ministerial projects. He could not tell him anything ; both of them gave way to all the suppositions which were inspired less by their hopes than by their secret

fears, and, after having combined facts, and calculated probabilities they separated, having decided that the Ministry would abide by the Charter; that the Chambers should meet on August 3; that the contest would be fought there; that the Ministry might indeed fall, but that in any case the Opposition, composed as it was of an immense majority of men who were attached to the monarchy, would not push its resistance so far as to refuse supplies, that *ultima ratio* of popular assemblies.

“Well, we were very much mistaken, yesterday,” said M. de Vitrolles to the Grand Référendaire, as they left the King’s study.

“How so?” said M. de Sémonville, “I do not think so.”

“Why? do you not see by the preoccupation which is visible on all faces, by the embarrassment of the Ministers when talking to each other, which is a good deal greater when talking to others, that they are about to have some very serious deliberations there, which, unfortunately I do not trust in the least.”

“In fact, they have one very serious matter for deliberation, and that is the speech from the throne; do you think such a speech is an easy one to make under the present circumstances?”

““ They are going to do something very different.”

““ That speech will be a very difficult matter,” M. de Sémonville repeated; and his reputation for penetration, sagacity and *finesse* were proverbial in the official world at that period.

‘ The Prefect of Police, M. Mangin, was also amongst the number of the functionaries who had come to St. Cloud. Some of the Ministers to whom M. de Vitrolles had been speaking about the state of ferment in which men’s minds were, and about the resistance which any measure, even a legal one, would be sure to encounter, had this magistrate summoned, and, without informing him of the resolutions they were about to take, asked him whether it were true that public opinion was in a state of alarming agitation. M. Mangin answered, that whatever was done, Paris would not stir, and that he would answer for that with his head.

‘ The Council was immediately opened. The different decrees, which had been passed at the previous meetings, were read again, textually, in the King’s presence, as was also the preamble which was intended to justify them. M. de Polignac renewed the assurances he had already given about the measures which had been taken to assure the execution of the decrees submitted

to the approval of the Council ; he was able to repress any attempt at resistance at once. The King then consulted the different opinions. The Ministers, having been successively, and in the order of the importance of their several departments, called upon to give their views, they all equally agreed that these decrees should be definitely drawn up, and not one of them suggested the slightest observation. The King interrupted himself several times in this formality, to assert that the resolutions which he wished to have sanctioned did not exceed the limits which the Charter put into his power, and that he was firmly resolved again to enter into the letter of the constitutional compact, as soon as the effervescence of the public mind had calmed down. When Charles X. had taken all the votes, he prepared to sign ; but, at the moment of affixing his signature to the papers which were laid before him, the old King stopped, leant his forehead on both his hands, and remained for a few moments absorbed in some grave meditation. Then, slowly raising his snowy head, and taking up his pen again, he said :

“ The more I think it over, the more convinced I am that it is impossible to do otherwise.”

‘ And he signed. Each Minister signed after him, and each of them, having put down the pen, rose and



bowed to him profoundly. This silent and absolute devotion to his wishes seemed to move Charles X. very deeply.

“Gentlemen,” he said to his Councillors, when the sacrifice was consummated, “these are grave measures; you may rely upon me, as I rely upon you; for the future, it is for life and death between us.”

‘A special decree appointed Marshal the Duke of Ragusa to active service as Governor of the First Military Division, of which he already had the title, as M. de Polignac said. Charles X., knowing the value that the Marshal attached to that proof of confidence, took upon himself, with his usual kindness, to inform personally the Marshal of his appointment.

‘A few moments later, when the Ministers were leaving St. Cloud to return to Paris, the Duke of Orleans left Neuilly to go to the chateau of St. Leu, where he was to dine with the Duke of Bourbon. The guests were tolerably numerous, and amongst them was Sir Charles Stuart, the English Ambassador, Count de Loewenhielm, the Swedish Minister, the Sardinian Ambassador, several members of the Diplomatic Corps, and M. de Vitrolles. Before dinner they walked in the garden. The Duke of Orleans, going up to M. de

Vitrolles, took him by the arm, and asked him to give him whatever information he possessed.

“You were at St. Cloud this morning?” he asked, with a kind of anxiety; “what did you see? What do you think of what you saw there?”

M. de Vitrolles described to the Prince the appearance of the King's Room, and did not conceal from him his fears of a determination which might bring about some serious change.

‘But what do they intend to do? They cannot do without the Chambers, or act against the provisions of the Charter,’ answered the Duke with some emotion.

Then laying a stress on the details which his informant had given him, the Duke renewed his questions and modified his conjectures. After dinner a play was performed; two pieces were given, one serious, the other comic; the actors were some of the guests, and among them was the Count de Loewenhielm, and an English woman, Sophia Dawes, already marked with the stamp of a most unenviable celebrity. Between the two pieces, the Duke of Orleans came up again to M. de Vitrolles, renewed his questions, and continually repeated:

‘But what can they want? What do they intend to do? Good heavens, what are they reserving for us?’

‘Whilst, at this late hour of the evening, the last of the Condés, an inoffensive old man, reserved for a tragic end, the cause of which sprung from the events which were about to take place, was carelessly giving himself up to the gaiety of these joyous scenes ; whilst, on the other hand, the Prince, his host, on whom these events were going to bestow a crown, feeling quite uneasy about the future, could hardly control his agitation and trouble ; in Paris, the Minister of Justice, M. de Chantelauze, had M. Sauvo, the chief editor of the *Moniteur*, summoned to his hôtel, remitted to him the decrees which had been signed during the day, and told him to publish them the next day.’

M. Sauvo having perused the documents could not conceal his strong emotion.

‘Well?’ said M. de Montbel, who was present.

‘May God save the King and France!’ was M. Sauvo’s answer.

‘We hope so, certainly, the two Ministers answered together.

‘Gentlemen,’ M. Sauvo said, as he prepared to retire, ‘I am fifty-seven years old. I witnessed the whole of the Revolution, and I am leaving you with great fear in my heart.’

This is a finished picture ; it lacks nothing ; neither

the full effect of the whole, nor the details, nor the correctness of drawing ; I boldly affirm that the whole of it is true. It is not necessary, in order to recognise a truthful likeness to have seen the original with one's own eyes.

After the twenty-fifth, came the twenty-sixth, and after the twenty-sixth, all the rest.

I do not know who the philosopher was, who said, or where it was said, that those events that are most expected take the most attentive mind unawares. Certainly, such was the case this time, as far as regarded myself. I was on the look out, as has been seen, without prejudices, without illusions ; I held the Ministers capable of everything through insolence, folly, servility, through letting matters take their own course, according to the individual character of each ; but I always rather hoped, that at the last moment their heart would fail them ; and so when M. Villemain came into my study at midday on July 26, boiling with indignation, he found me given up to my ordinary preoccupations, *nescio quid meditans nugarum, totus in illis* ; the *Moniteur* was on my desk ; I had not even opened it.

‘ Well,’ he said to me, ‘ I presume you have seen the crimes which have been committed this morning.’

I opened the *Moniteur* ; I read an account of the

crimes, and my first care was to write to the newly elected deputies of the Eure to come to Paris at once, and to be ready for any event.

I went out with M. Villemain ; then each of us went, as quickly as we could, to our best friends, to try to unite and muster in force, but naturally each of them was doing the same thing, and so no one met anyone else during the first half of the day, and not till night-fall did I learn the events that had successively happened since the *Moniteur* appeared.

I will not give here again what can be read in all the accounts published then or since. It is well known that the first act of resistance took place in the printing-offices, and that was only natural ; the first decree, the first in order as in importance, was a death blow to all the newspapers, and they had been informed of that decree at day break, by a circular from the Prefect of Police. Not to protest was just to abdicate all the powers of the Press ; this was the reason why nearly all the principal daily organs met at the office of the *National*, which was the boldest of all, and in the best position to answer all comers. In this office, originated the energetic protest which M. Thiers drew up, and which was signed with forty-five names, which have nearly all since become celebrated. Here originated

the consultation which was held in the study of M. Dupin, the regular counsel to the *Constitutionnel*, between the most celebrated members of the Paris bar, a consultation which only ended in proclaiming the illegality of the decrees, without coming to any resolution as to what the line of conduct should be, but which was not long in bearing fruit; and, as a matter of fact, from these came, what was the first sound of the tocsin, that twofold decision which was given almost simultaneously by the *tribunal civil 'en référé,'* and by the Tribunal of Commerce, which enjoined the printers of the *Courrier Français* and of the *Journal du Commerce* to go on with printing those two papers, in spite of any prohibition on the part of the authorities.

But what in the meanwhile were doing the deputies who were in Paris?

Just what we were doing ourselves; they were trying to find each other in that large city. A first meeting had taken place, which was, however, quite a chance one, at M. Casimir Perrier's; there were only seven of them present, and so nothing could be settled, except to call a second, which met about eight o'clock in the evening at the house of M. de Laborde. It was, however, postponed to the next day at the house of M. Perrier's, as only thirteen were present, the second time.

27<sup>th</sup>

What was the King doing ?

He was out hunting ; he left St. Cloud at seven in the morning, and did not get back till seven at night.

M. de Polignac ?

As Provisional Minister for War, he was busily engaged with army contractors.

And the Duke of Ragusa ?

He was waiting for his letter of appointment, and the orders of the King, who, however, went to bed without giving them to him.

However, if Paris was quiet, it was only so in appearance. When the *Moniteur* was posted up, groups gathered in the Palais Royal and the neighbouring streets in order to read and to discuss it ; some street orators mounted on chairs to read it out aloud. Towards the end of the morning these groups became hourly larger, and their language more insulting and menacing. The workmen, when their day's work was over, left their workshops, and, instead of dispersing, also gathered together into groups, and no doubt their masters had something to do with this. Here, at any rate, is a fact which I knew, perhaps, only too well.

My first care had been to hasten to the Luxembourg, and to try to come to an understanding with the notabilities of our Chamber. I found nobody there.

Sémonville had gone out; our Chancellor, who was then M. Pastoret, and who, I think, had not at that time an official residence there, had not come. After having knocked in vain at several doors, before crossing the river again I went to the *Globe* office, into the small drawing-room which served as a *cenaculum* for the editors of that paper and of the *Revue Française*, to which I was a contributor. No one was there but the employés and one of my friends, M. Renouard, who is now Councillor of the Court of Cassation. Like myself, he had only come out of mere curiosity to hear what news he could pick up. After a few minutes, there rushed in the editor of the *Globe*, looking quite frightened. He told us, in a half pleased and half vexed manner, that he could hardly restrain his workmen, that nearly all were shouting as loud as they could, and were impatient to get out into the street.

‘Well,’ we all said to him, ‘why don’t you let them do it? It is no duty of ours to assist oppression, and to act as policemen against ourselves.’

‘As you please,’ he said, and he ran out.

Were we right or wrong?

I can hardly remember how or where I spent the last hours of that first day, Monday, July 26th. What I do remember is, that when I was informed by M. de



Rémusat of the improvised meeting of that morning in the office of the *National*, and of the protest which he had signed as editor of the *Globe*—a protest which was to be published the next day—I could not help feeling an amount of uneasiness which he did not share.

‘In the present crisis,’ I observed to him, ‘the Ministry will not resort to half measures, and it is quite possible, that, in order to put down the press the more easily, it will begin by suppressing the writers. Believe me, the wisest thing for you will be not to return home to-night; come to my house, and to-morrow we shall see.’ I had a chamber of refuge got ready for him at the back of the house, on the second floor. It was late when we returned, and he spent the night there.

It was a good thing for him that he did so.

The next day, the twenty-seventh, the protest appeared as a matter of fact; but not in all the newspapers. The Royalist papers, being well and properly provided with an authorization in proper form, were satisfied with singing a hymn in praise of the *coup d'état*; the *Journal des Débats* and the *Constitutionnel*, whether from uncertainty or timidity, laid their arms down for the moment, following, as was said, the advice of their counsel, M. Dupin. The Opposition papers, on the contrary, drew the sword; with the

protest on the front page, they were distributed by thousands in the capital, and sent in bales into the Departments. At once M. Billot, the Attorney-General, drew up forty-seven warrants of arrest, which were not executed only because of the turn events took ; and our Prefect of Police, the famous Mangin, whose name was already notorious in many respects, and who this time added to his fame by rivalling *Jocrisse* himself, in closing the street-door to prevent the escape of the bird, only after the blow had been struck, went to no end of trouble to seize the protest and the papers which published it.

The Commissaries of Police, decked out in their white scarves, but knowing that they should find nothing but stony faces everywhere, began their errand with requisitioning in every quarter locksmiths, blacksmiths, and other ironworkers, to help them in their raid on workshops, presses, cupboards, and drawers. The said commissaries looked very foolish when they found the editors standing ready to do battle, *pro aris et focus*, in the street, waiting bravely for the enemy with no other weapon in hand but copies of the *Code pénal*, loudly denouncing the threatened attack as a *vol avec effraction*, and reading out aloud, with an emphasis on every syllable, the articles of the Code which punish this

crime with hard labour ; all this amidst the applause of the crowd, which gathered round and protected them.

The effect was magical.

The auxiliaries of the Commissaries took fright ; they first retreated and then ran away, or deserted with their tools, amidst the sneers of the assembled crowd ; and the rout was such that the authorities, in order to be obeyed, had to send for workmen, *ad hoc*, from the prisons, men (penal servitude convicts) whose business it was to rivet on the irons of galley-slaves and to put on their handcuffs. Nothing could be more fitting or symbolic.

This was, however, nothing but an episode, or if the expression is preferred, one of the episodes of the general movement. From daybreak everybody was moving ; the whole of the working population of Paris was in the streets, going up and down the public squares and boulevards, and enjoying themselves in the drinking-shops ; all the young men from the public schools mixed with them and got excited ; by degrees, amongst the *bourgeoisie* and the better classes, the curious looked at this coming and going with a certain mixture of satisfaction and uneasiness. Soon the block became so great at the Palais Royal that it was thought necessary to clear it and to close the gates ; but the crowd inside being thus forced on to the crowd outside,

a tumult became inevitable, and whether men wished it or no, fights increased in number. To enable them to maintain ever so small an amount of order in this *mêlée*, the unhappy police had, till the end of the morning, nothing to dispose of but a few handfuls of gendarmes, who, taking it altogether, certainly received more blows than they gave. The Duke of Ragusa, who had at last left St. Cloud, did not arrive till midday to establish his headquarters in the Carrousel; and it was not till four o'clock that he had a few troops under his command, and they were not very well provided with ammunition, and very badly off for provisions.

Up to that time nothing had announced any aggressive feeling among the crowd; they had no arms, and uttered no warlike cry except 'Vive la charte!' There was no general directing body, so much so, that towards two o'clock the young men who marched at the head of those who were assembled nearest to the fashionable quarters, and who, in some manner, acted as their leaders, having heard that a meeting of Deputies was being held at the house of M. Casimir Perrier, Rue Neuve-de-Luxembourg, went there to speak and offer their good offices.

That meeting was the same which had been adjourned the evening before at M. de Laborde's, and which now

had returned to its first meeting-place. It consisted at that moment of thirty members, and as it had no official character and was voluntary, and consisted merely of citizens, I was present by the express invitation of those of my friends who were there as Deputies.

But what was to be done? What line of action was to be taken? In the present state of affairs and of men's minds, what line of conduct could such a very small minority lay down for itself?

There were as many ideas on that matter as there were members present.

Some were for still patiently waiting, as every day, every hour, was bringing in new recruits to the Deputies. Others proposed an address to the King; others a protest charged with the threat of refusing supplies.

In the meanwhile, and whilst each one was defending his own views, matters were going on their course; other meetings were held; amongst them there was one which sat permanently at the office of the *National*, and which sent M. Boulay (of the Meurthe) and M. Mérilhou to fraternise with us. The crowd formed at the door insisted upon entering, and threatened to break the door open. In short, that happened which everyone knew must happen: the cavalry and infantry which

were guarding the Foreign Office, only a few yards off, received orders to disperse the mob, and did it well ; the noise in the street, the galloping of horses, the cries of the fugitives made any discussion impossible ; it became necessary to cut the Gordian knot, and so the protest was decided on. M. Dupin, M. Guizot, and M. Villemain were each instructed to draw up an outline of it on their own account ; and an adjournment was made to the next day, to the house of M. Andry de Puyraveau, forwarding agents, 40, Rue du Faubourg Poissonnière.

The choice was not a happy one. Thus we took as our standard-bearer a man of very revolutionary name, one whose language and habits were very violent and very vulgar, and we fixed as our headquarters on the very centre of all popular agitation, in case of serious and lasting troubles.

M. Bérard has given an account of this meeting in a blustering manner, and in language very insulting towards many who were present, especially towards M. Casimir Perrier ; I have no recollection whatever of having heard anything at all like what he relates.

When I returned home, I thought that it would be a good thing to make a fresh effort to come to an understanding with such of my colleagues whom a lucky chance

should enable me to meet. Again I went to the Luxembourg and reached it without difficulty ; everything was still very quiet on the left bank of the Seine. I found no one there whom I knew, but I was informed, by the servants, as far as I remember, that M. de Sémonville and M. d'Argout had gone to St. Cloud, with the design, if not with the hope, of getting yesterday's decrees cancelled. It was either that or something like it.

Returning by the quays towards the end of the morning, I heard for the first time, but at a great distance off, at the extremity of the boulevards, some musket shots. After hastily dining alone, I went out again to visit the neighbourhood of the theatre of events ; on the bridge de la Concorde I met M. de Vence, a general officer, who was not employed in Paris and who was in mufti, and, like myself, only going as a spectator. The firing was heard more and more distinctly, and I asked him whether he did not think, as I did, that they were chance shots, or blank cartridges : ' No,' he answered, ' these are troops of the line, who are firing in earnest, and in double file ! ' I remember that technical word.

It was six o'clock in the evening when the Duke of Ragusa undertook, with the few troops which he had at his disposal, to clear the streets leading to the Louvre,

and to get rid of the crowds that were wedged in between the Palais Royal and the Boulevards. This was not effected without a shower of stones, and charges of horse and infantry, and even without the beginning of the erection of barricades. I tried to get into the adjacent streets successively from different ways, but I was very careful in doing so to avoid increasing the number of sightseers, for fear of catching a stray blow in the crowd.

As I did not meet with much success, I tried my best at any rate to find out what was going on in other places and in higher quarters, that is to say at St. Cloud. I went towards M. Pasquier's little house, as he generally knew everything that was to be known. When I arrived at the Rue d'Anjou, which was not far out of my way, I found the master of the house in his study, surrounded by half a dozen Peers who were more his friends than mine, and all of them very frightened and not without reason, and all making superhuman but useless efforts to induce the Abbé de Montesquiou, to go to the King and to try to induce him to give way, by pleading his dearest interests. If I remember rightly this attempt ended when the step which M. de Sémonville and M. d'Argout had taken was known, about whom however nothing further was learnt. I do



not know who came and told us that the Ministry was going, to proclaim Paris in a state of siege, which was true, but only half true ; the resolution to do so had been come to in the evening, but as the Duke of Ragusa had announced that order was re-established, the Ministers deferred sending the decree to St. Cloud till the next day.

I returned home about midnight without meeting either troops or a crowd.

The night passed over quite undisturbed in our quarter, it was quiet even in the Champs Elysées, and in the Faubourg Saint-Honoré ; indeed, as I was going, about ten o'clock, to M. Guizot's, who lived in the Rue de la Ville-l'Evêque, I saw no sign of disturbance.\* I found M. Guizot in his study, engaged in writing out clearly the outline of the protest with which he had been entrusted the day before. In the next room, the

\* In the 'Memoirs of M. de Chateaubriand,' vol. ix., p. 222, will be found the following paragraph :

'A meeting of the monarchical party, composed of peers and deputies, took place at M. Guizot's. The Duc de Broglie was there ; M. Thiers, M. Mignet, and M. ~~Castel~~, although their views were not the same, went also. There it was that the usurping party for the first time uttered the name of the Duke of Orleans.'

The author of this assertion has been wrongly informed ; the meeting was accidental, and M. Thiers and M. Mignet were not present. There was no question of the Duke of Orleans either directly or indirectly.

drawing-room, there were several of our friends, amongst others M. de Rémusat and M. Cousin, who were disputing rather warmly; after a quarter of an hour an editor of the *National*, who has since made himself a name, came in; his name was M. Carrel, and he was a man of intelligence as well as of heart, whose conduct, however, in 1823 was open to different interpretations. 'It is all over this time,' he said sadly to us, 'the Government is master of the field; but we must have patience, there is something else in store for it!' We went on for some time discussing the present and future chances, when all of a sudden the servants came rushing in, crying out that the tri-colour flag was seen floating in the distance; we hastened out into the street, where a great deal of noise, shouts, and tumult were beginning to be heard, intermingled here and there with a few shots. When we came out of the Place de la Ville-l'Evêque at the end of the Boulevard we saw, in the angle which faces the Madeleine, a squad of men in blouses, armed with guns, who seemed as if they were about to take aim at us, but seeing that we were unarmed they laughingly signed to us to pass. Ten yards off, we saw a dozen street-boys who were swiftly climbing up the steeple with a flag in their hands, and almost at the same

moment we heard the tocsin sounding out loudly, first from the Hôtel de Ville, and then from the Cathedral; the tricolor was already floating from those two buildings.

What had happened ?

Something very simple.

The Duke of Ragusa could dispose only of about three or four thousand men in all, taken from different corps; he was expecting reinforcements, which did not arrive till all was over. After he had cleared the streets a little, as the night appeared as if it would pass quietly, he profited by it to concentrate his small body of men, to bring together his detachments, and to call in his outposts, which were too far away or too widely dispersed to be able to support each other. That was the A B C of his business. As the Hôtel de Ville was situated at the extremity of his field of operations, he had only left a guard of sixteen men there, to whom he intended to send support soon; at any rate, the Prefect, M. de Chabrol, being uneasy at his position, had gone at six o'clock in the morning to inform the Minister of the Interior, M. de Peyronnet, of it, who, as he was just starting for St. Cloud, reassured him as well as he could. So it happened that just at this time, the whole population being scattered about

the streets, and all the military force having fallen back on their head-quarters, crowds could be formed without meeting any obstacle. The first and largest was that at the Place de Grève, which was the usual meeting-place for all day-labourers; the crowd had had a quarrel with the guard at the Hôtel de Ville, had disarmed it, and, carrying its point, had burst open the doors, sent the Prefect, without, however, doing him any further harm, into his library; then some, who were bolder than the rest, had clambered on to the roof, and there had hoisted the tricolor and sounded the tocsin, apparently to see what would come of it; then, as the one was not seen and the other was not heard at any great distance, they had hastened as fast as their legs could carry them to do the same at Notre-Dame.

It need not be asked whether crowds were collected from all parts at these signals; from street to street, barricades were erected to protect them; so also all the undefended posts were quickly occupied. The uniform of the National Guard, which M. de Villèle had so foolishly disbanded and so imperfectly disarmed, was soon seen here and there; as soon as some were armed, everyone wished to be so; the gunmakers' shops were pillaged, the foremen were disarmed, as were also the

Fusiliers who had been left behind the deserted posts; the mob took possession of the powder magazine of Deux-Moulins and of the arsenal dépôt situated near the church of St. Thomas d'Aquin, and the military prison of l'Abbaye was opened.

When the Duke of Ragusa received these different items of news, one after another, just at the very moment when, disposing his troops in four columns, he was giving the order to assume the offensive again, he scarcely had the time, though he did have it, to send a despatch to St. Cloud by an orderly, who was the bearer of these very words, which the Duke de la Rochefoucauld had said on July 14, 1789, to Louis XVI.: 'This is no mere riot, it is a revolution.'

This despatch was, however, never delivered, and was lost in the confusion; but the Duke of Ragusa had his implied answer to it in the decree declaring Paris in a state of siege, a decree which was handed to him by M. de Polignac himself, who, with his colleagues, had come and established himself at head-quarters, so as morally to share the responsibility of the Commander-in-Chief. Then began that eternal strategy of Parisian civil wars, a strategy which invariably consists in marching three parallel columns from the Tuileries to the Hôtel de Ville, one of which follows the Boulevards,

the second the Rue St. Honoré, and the third the Quays, their duty being to overthrow all obstacles, to sweep away all crowds which oppose their march, and to return to their point of departure, driving before them the *disjecta membra* of these dislocated crowds.

Whilst these three columns were operating with this aim, the little meeting of Deputies were pursuing theirs; M. Guizot started with his protest in his pocket, and tried—then not a very easy matter—to reach the residence of M. Audry de Puyraveau, situated in the Rue du Faubourg-Poissonnière, that is to say, in the very heart of the riot. I did not go with him, as I was not a Deputy; neither a fellow-feeling nor a point of honour obliged me to do so—I liked neither the host nor the hostelry. I was quite certain that such a meeting, governed by a revolutionary spirit within and without, would be worse than useless, and would only make every regular solution of the situation more and more impossible, and effect a violent solution, whose consequences would exceed every reasonable prevision and all reasonable conduct.

When he arrived and as soon as he went in, M. Guizot could convince himself of this. The meeting was small, although it was afterwards increased by the arrival of M. Lafitte and M. de la Fayette, who had been absent

from Paris, but had hastened back on hearing of the outbreak. It was held in a lower room, with open windows, so that it was in communication with the street. M. Manguin then proposed, in a loud voice, the formation of a Provisional Government, that is to say, the overthrow and even the impeachment of the Royal Government.

## BOOK VII.

## SEVENTH PERIOD.—SEQUEL.



## II.

## THE REVOLUTION OF JULY.—REFLECTIONS.

I HAVE been following step by step, month by month, often day by day, and sometimes hour by hour, the series of events which, dating from the Ministry of August 8, 1829, to which M. de Polignac's name has so unfortunately been attached, stops at that Ministry of August 11, 1830, which closed the so-called July Revolution, and began the Government which sprang from that Revolution.

I have told only what I have seen with my own eyes, and heard with my own ears ; I have related what little I have done, and, I may be permitted to add, the little which I have seen done. I have filled up the voids in my recital by borrowing from others, who were eye-witnesses of the incidents which



escaped my notice, and of those I chose the most trustworthy and copied them almost word for word.

I might rest satisfied with this.

But for any man, whoever he may be, it is a matter of too great importance to have helped, no matter in how small a degree, to overturn a throne; to bring in a dynasty, though it may only have ruled a few years; to open a new era in history, though it might be looked on as a passing event—it is, I say, a matter of too great importance for such a man not to ask himself constantly, till his last hour, if the act in which he was concerned was legitimate, and whether he acted rightly or wrongly in concurring in it.

And here I will say a few words, as much about the general character of our last revolution but one as about my personal position at that period.

I will begin with myself.

I am neither a Legitimist nor a Democrat in the sense which is attributed to these two words in our days. I do not approve of there being any dogmas in politics, that is to say, principles which are superior to reason and social interest. What I have said aloud, publicly, from the tribune, I have the right to repeat in the silence of my study.

I do not believe in the Divine right of kings.

I do not believe that a nation belongs to one family, belongs to it in body and property, like a flock of sheep, to use or abuse, so that whatever that family may do, to whatever lengths it may go, of whatever enormities it may be guilty, it retains the right to rule.

But, on the other hand, neither do I believe in the sovereignty of the people.

I do not think that a nation has the right to change its Government how and when it pleases, merely because it pleases. I do not recognise that the majority plus one of a nation has the right to please itself in the matter of Government; I should not even recognise that right if the nation were unanimous, because I do not allow it to any man in particular, because men have been placed on this earth by the Creator, not to please themselves, but to obey the eternal laws of justice and truth, to live like reasonable and moral beings, to hold to their engagements when they have made any, and to keep their oaths when they have taken any. The duties of nations towards their Governments, are, as I think, no less sacred than those of Governments towards nations, and the enforcement of one's own good pleasure seems to me equally insolent and abject, whether proceeding from the streets or from kings' palaces.

Such have always been my feelings, and always, as may have been seen, during the course of my public life, I have taken them as the rule of my conduct.

In 1792, I was too young to deplore consciously the fall of the monarchy and the accession of anarchy. In 1814, when I had arrived at years of discretion, I did not wish for the return of the House of Bourbon. Whatever just aversion the imperial rule inspired me with, the invasion of France was still more hateful to me ; but I did not impute that invasion to anyone but its real author, and I did not think those princes responsible, whose intervention after all was beneficial to the country. *A fortiori*, I had nothing to do with the crimes of the Hundred-days, and I detested the second invasion still more than the first, if that be possible. The House of Bourbon being at last re-established, and God knows under what auspices and at what a price, my conduct towards it was, I am sure, always loyal, and, I hope, sensible, being equally removed from the optimism of professional Royalists, and the pessimism of their opponents. I have been in turn, and on several occasions, either in the ranks of the Opposition or in those of the Ministry: in opposition I never demanded anything which did not seem to me to be good in itself, and possible at the moment ; as

a Ministerialist I never asked for anything for myself, and received nothing as a favour. Until 1828, I was the only one in the House of Peers on whom the Cross of the Legion of Honour had not fallen from the clouds, I mean pell-mell in a general promotion. I have always kept myself at a distance from, and out of the reach of, the Court, having no taste for that smack of the *ancien régime* with which the Restoration was necessarily imbued, and still less for that appetite for reprisals from which every returned exile can hardly preserve himself. I kept myself equally at a distance from all Republican and Bonapartist plots, as I was neither the one nor the other either in heart or opinion. Being a duke and a peer, by right of birth—that was the language of the period—neither Louis XVIII. nor Charles X., neither the Dauphin nor the Dauphine knew me by sight, and never addressed a word to me. I was never presented to the Duchess de Berri, and I only saw the Duke of Bordeaux in his exile in 1840, when he was, like myself, looking at the monument erected to the last of the Stuarts by George IV., in St. Peter's at Rome.

No one, therefore, was freer than myself from any engagements at the approach of the Revolution of July, and to complete my confession I will add that, having attentively followed the rapid course of events, I did not



give myself up as readily as others did to the prospects which seemed to open. The necessity under which we were of passing through a state of revolutionary transition, and the uncertainty of the definite result, inspired me with more repugnance and anxiety than the hope of a better state of affairs had attraction for me. It is said that Charles I. wrote to Queen Henrietta-Maria that he had never been unfaithful to her, even in thought. I might have said the same with regard to the Bourbons of the elder branch, but naturally under the condition that the fidelity should be mutual.

To what extent were my feelings those of France, and by that I mean those of the majority of the country, the large and healthy majority of all the classes which form the nation?

That is a question which might without doubt receive very different answers according to time, place, and person; but it is quite certain that, in 1830, France, during a very long and violent crisis, acted like an honourable and sensible nation, that all she did was irreproachable, that, on the contrary, she suffered everything in order to cause the wrong eventually to fall on Charles X. and his secret or open councillors, official or officious, so as not to afford them the least excuse, not even the shade of a pretext.

It has been said of the *coup d'état* that it was an effect without a cause. One could, one even ought to have gone back further. The real effect without a cause was the Ministry of August 8.

M. de Villèle had fallen, if not beneath the blows of, at least abandoned by, a Chamber which he had, in his good time, wheedled as he pleased, and quite peopled with his friends. The elections of 1827 had no doubt been lively, though peaceable and regular enough. From these elections had proceeded a most desirable Chamber, composed, as it was, almost entirely of very good Royalists, and that Chamber had brought about a Ministry in keeping with the views held by its majority, very good in itself, and which would, without doubt, have had a tolerably long existence if we had had a little patience and the King a grain of good sense. But, though we were impatient, we had no bad intentions, and only wronged ourselves, whilst the King, suddenly seizing the opportunity for which he had been watching for a long time, of laying violent hands upon the Charter, and of creating a new *ancien régime* after his own fashion, with his eyes open, did himself great and wilful injury.

Everybody knows, in fact, that Charles X. had always wished and hoped, sooner or later to do, either

as heir presumptive or as King, what he did in 1830; his familiars expressed themselves freely about this amongst themselves, and the *enfants terribles* of the party did not scruple to talk about it quite loud.

The Ministry of August 8 was the first step to this, a step quite open and unconcealed; the names of the Ministers, or at any rate of several of them, spoke even more loudly. In this riding the hobby horse of their master, they were not infatuated by it as he was; most of them—all, perhaps—intended either to retire in time or to get off more cheaply than they did; three, even, and amongst them one of the most compromised, stopped half-way, but the others became, in spite of themselves, godfathers of the King's folly and accomplices in the crime, because they had not enough moral feeling or sense to say 'No.'

It is a matter worthy of notice that nobody was deceived. The whole of France read the *coup d'état* on the forehead of the Ministry in spite of its denials, its protestations, and, indeed, even of its real intentions; and what is still more remarkable, the whole of France stood on the defensive like one man—the whole of France instinctively understood that the true system of defence was strict, but rigorous and inexorable legality.

When it clearly told the King that a certain under

standing, a sufficient and loyal understanding between the spirit and the direction of his government, and the wishes and the feelings of his people, was the foundation and the condition of the Charter which his brother had granted under the pressure of events and the sway of circumstances, the Chamber of Deputies no doubt spoke rather strongly, but it no doubt, too, spoke the truth. The terms in which that declaration was conceived had been thought over and set down by one of the oldest and most acknowledged amongst the Legitimists, by the man who, under the imperial *régime*, had for several years risked his life in the cause of legitimacy.

On both sides it was either to be taken or to be left alone.

In making a last appeal to the country, the King used his right and was within his right. In the same way, the country was in its right when it answered him in the elections of 1830: and I must say that in all that I know about the matter, those elections were not only regular but loyal, and without any afterthought, without any pessimist intentions, as far, at least, as that was possible at a juncture where but little hope remained and everyone was expecting anything.

When that was done there was no longer room for delay, for putting off, for dilatory expedients; the King



had no choice left but to advance or to retreat, we had none but to see him come.

Our plan of defence was simple, direct, and unanimously agreed upon, even without previous understanding between us.

Our intention was to refuse payment of any tax that had not been regularly established ; to resort to force in case of necessity, but only against force, and whilst appealing to justice at the same time ; to behave in the same manner as regarded any act that was notoriously illegal ; but to abstain altogether from provocation, conspiracy, or reprisals.

We were anxious to avoid anything that might compromise the future.

The word of command was obeyed as readily as it had been given.

When the *coup d'état* burst over Paris, it encountered there neither secret societies nor a Committee of Direction, nor open or hidden preparations for war ; at most there were there a few deputies and peers, who were habitually kept in the capital by their business, or who had anticipated the opening of the Session by a few days, who were, however, scattered, and not grouped, and without any understanding amongst themselves.

When he hurled his prohibition at the newspapers and journalists, by laying hands on their establishments, their desks, their presses, and all their belongings, the Prefect of Police found nothing in his way but the *Code Pénal*, which the proprietors invoked, and justice, which said they were right and he was wrong.

When the same evening they dispersed by force of arms groups of unarmed people, who were limiting themselves to reading in a low voice, or out aloud, the fatal decrees which were placarded up, apparently to be read, the gendarmerie had only to sustain a hand-to-hand struggle, where a few fisticuffs were returned for a few sword-cuts.

It was the same during the best part of the next day. Crowds, indeed, swarmed in the streets; but they were peaceful and unarmed, without leaders or flags, and without any apparent or hidden guidance.

The real fight did not begin until the evening, when the troops arrived. Then it was that, in resisting, the crowd began to make use of anything it could find as weapons, to break open the armourers' shops and the posts that were badly guarded. All that was, however, done with so little connection or leadership, that, at night, Marshal Marmont wrote to St. Cloud that all was over.

I will say nothing of the two days of full civil, or

rather civic war, in which the army was beaten by the mob, all its positions carried by escalade, and the royal guard unceremoniously driven as far as the Seine. I say the mob, because not one head was raised an inch above all the rest. It was an anonymous but complete victory, the flag of resistance having replaced that of aggression over the Tuileries; the small body of Deputies who happened to be in Paris did not interfere, except in vain to ask the aggressive Government to grant an armistice, and to nominate a Municipal Commission, which was entrusted with the duty of victualling the city and of maintaining internal order, as far as could be.

In Paris, the Revolution was over; it was so also at once throughout France. It was like a series of electric counter-shocks, and everywhere under the same conditions of defensive legality, everywhere without leaders, without guidance, without preparation, and almost everywhere without obstacles.

The Revolution, I say, was over, and it was so in a strictly legal fashion. Charles X. had violated his oath and had released us from ours. He had attacked the country by force of arms and had been beaten, and now he had for him neither right nor force. The country had both, and could dispose of itself.

Then came the proposals of Charles X. which had

been extorted from him, extorted hour by hour by the growing progress of events.

In justice the country was not bound to admit any of them. In reason it was bound not to admit any of them, unless it found that they contained good faith, reparation and security.

But who was to be the judge on these three points? The moment was pressing; the Chambers had not yet met. It could only be the good sense of the country, which was victorious and in arms, enlightened by that of some men in a more or less high position, and whose advice it would consent to follow.

There were but few of these men, and they had not much influence, as they had not prepared or directed anything, and had not risked their lives in the attempt. Nearly all were inclined for conciliation; but how, and on what basis? What proposal could one suggest to them?

The recall of Charles X. and of his family under the auspices of a Liberal Ministry!

How long would such a Ministry last? How many days, months, weeks, would elapse before the new Martignac would be dismissed, to make room for a new Polignac?

The Regency to be committed for some length of

time to the care of the Duke of Orleans, in the face of Charles X., who would watch him with folded arms !

That would have been, indeed, a regular Dover Court, unless a new La Fayette could be found to keep watch over this new Louis XVI., as after the return from Varennes ; but the former, the good La Fayette, would not have undertaken it twice.

To call to the throne a child eight years old, apparently under the guardianship of his grandfather, and in charge of his mother, unless the heroic line had been taken of secluding them somewhere or other, and of bringing up the young King in tutelage !

All that had no sense, it did not possess even the shadow of good sense, and would not bear two minutes' discussion. After a lapse of time one can think, say, or write what one likes about it ; but at the time and on the spot, no one was found to take any of the delusive methods of settlement seriously. Public good sense would not have allowed it, and it would have been right ; the matter had come to a crisis. The house was on fire, and anyone who would have thought of throwing oil on it, in the wicked and foolish hope of making matters worse, and some day or other of bringing order out of the existing disorder, according to the

expression of a man who understood the subject, would have had a bad time of it.

What was done then, or rather what then settled itself quickly, though not without the regrets of some, of whom I was one, yet without any contradiction, was to depose a prince who could not return to Paris, to prefer a monarchy to a republic, to summon the next heir to the throne and to reform the charter exactly as it required reforming; and all this was the work of instinctive and spontaneous wisdom. I had nothing to do with it—in fact, no particular individual had more to do with it than all the rest collectively; but as I cannot find in all history any Government whose origin was so legitimate and blameless, so free from fraud and violence, which was so devoid of reaction and exaction, where reason and moderation crowned legitimate resistance so worthily, I find no room for regret; and, in the name of my country and of humanity, I congratulate myself, in spite of the events of 1848 and 1852, on having been a witness of it. ✓

## BOOK VII.

## SEQUEL.

## III.

THE MINISTRY OF AUGUST 11, 1830.

HAVING taken office on the 11th of August, our first Ministry resigned on November 2. Altogether it was in office two months and ten days. During this short period it was unable to do either much harm or much good. Besides, that was neither its lot nor its condition of existence. To ward off the first blow of an inevitable reaction, to save what was left of the monarchical principle, to gain time by giving our attention to what was most pressing—in a word, to prepare for the reaction of the reaction was our task: it was, as nearly as could be, our plan, and above all, our hope.

I will faithfully detail our perplexities, our efforts, and our troubles; perhaps it will be found that, taking it all together, we did not perform that task very badly.

I say 'we' with all due reserve, because the first and the smallest difficulty existed in ourselves. Our vessel

leaked in several places, and our crew did not work well together. Our Cabinet was a curious assemblage, containing as it did seven real Ministers who were effective, and who each ruled over a distinct Department, and four benevolent Counsellors who sat with folded arms, looking at the various measures, without being responsible for anything or disposing of anybody, but who had (at any rate three out of the four) the ear of the King and enjoyed the breeze of popular favour—was in a measure a sort of peasant's knife, the blade of which was rather loose, and in which nobody exactly knew which was which. Besides that, we made ourselves perhaps too much accessible: the bedroom of M. Dupont (of the Eure) used to be thrown open the first thing in the morning to all the *suppôts de la basoche*;\* and, in the evening, the drawing-room where M. Laffitte used to play his usual game of piquet, used to be the meeting-place of *tout le tripot de la Bourse*:† that drawing-room and the bedroom of Dupont (of the Eure) had become regular clubs, where newsmongers used to come to reap what information they could gather, with the view of turning it to reasonable or unreasonable advantage.

\* A contemptuous term for lawyers and petty employés connected with law-courts.

† A contemptuous way of designating stockbrokers and those who gamble on the Exchange.



It was necessary, however, to set to work at the beginning, as is usual, by distributing some choice morsels to the nobler appetites, but this time, contrary to custom, without exciting too much outcry.

Vice-Admiral Duperré, one of the conquerors of Algiers (though he achieved his victory perhaps rather reluctantly), was made Admiral; Marshal Soult, one of the vanquished at Waterloo, and who for that reason had been excluded from the House of Peers, was elevated to the peerage; General Gérard, Minister of War, was made a marshal; M. Dupin, Minister without portfolio, was appointed to the post of Avocat Général to the Court of Cassation, left vacant through the resignation of M. Mourre; in those last two nominations the Cabinet rather took the lion's share. M. de la Fayette was made Commander-in-Chief of the National Guard, an enormous but unavoidable fault, for which we nearly had to pay dearly very soon—it was making him the Count d'Artois of the new *régime*; then, as regards minor posts, M. Odilon-Barrot was appointed Prefect of Paris, and M. de Schonen Procureur-Général to the Cour des Comptes\* (they had both just returned from accompanying Charles X. to Cherbourg); then last, at my own personal request, M. Villemain

\* Whose members control State accounts and the expenditure of public money.

became Vice-President of the Royal Council of Public Instruction.

Benjamin Constant was the most difficult for whom to find a post. His reputation as a publicist was wide and well deserved, but only middling as a speaker, and his character was thought but little of. He had never got over his adventure of the Hundred Days; being lowered, especially in his own estimation, he had mixed, during the second Restoration, with the second-rate society of the Opposition; the French Academy had obstinately closed its doors against him. Seeing that he was sunk in debt and worn out by nights of debauchery and gambling, it was scarcely possible to make a Minister of him; the Duke of Orleans had not summoned him to his Privy Council; yet Benjamin Constant regarded, perhaps not altogether unreasonably, any second-rate position as beneath him. I was directed to make him the offer of a seat in the Conseil d'Etat, which he haughtily refused. I nevertheless did not look upon myself as beaten. I had thought of placing at the head of the Conseil d'Etat the most important and busiest of its committees, le Comité du Contentieux,\* whose duties I

\* Appointed to inquire into and to decide upon all matters of litigation between the State and local administrations, and between either of the two former and private individuals.

intended largely to increase, and which, under the name of Committee of Legislation, it was further my intention to entrust with the preparation of the Bills relating to civil and criminal matters; as also with the definite drawing up of all other Bills whose principle should have been previously settled either at a Cabinet Council or merely in the Conseil d'Etat. I offered Benjamin Constant the Presidency of that Committee, with a salary in proportion to its importance; he refused again, but at the end of two or three days he thought better of it, and I hastened to obtain the King's signature to his nomination, for fear lest his pride should definitely gain the upper hand. There was much talk at the time of some arrangements come to between him and the King through the intervention of M. Laffitte—a sort of transaction similar to that of which Mirabeau had set the example when he made overtures to the Court in 1791. I do not know if this report had any foundation; at any rate, I had nothing to do with it; and in Benjamin Constant, as will be seen, I did not find a very helpful ally.

When everything else had been settled as well as could be at first, the next most urgent matter was to enter into relations with the different Foreign Powers, and not to allow our work to remain like a sort of

adventure à la *Masaniello* in the very heart of Europe. The diplomatic body, accredited to Charles X., had, as I mentioned above, remained in Paris, and was friendly rather than otherwise; but, being possessed of no regular powers, it had no strictly official intercourse with us. To secure the latter, it was necessary to write *propria*, that is to say, *regiâ manu* to the Crowned Heads, and make them accept the *bon frère*; and to that end it was necessary, according to circumstances, to season the letters with verbal comments and explanations; and for that, again, it was indispensable to be very careful in the choice of the messengers who should be entrusted with such delicate missions.

General Baudrand, who had become first aide-de-camp to the young Duke of Chartres, after having been his mentor, crossed the Channel; he was received with open arms by the people. All England was intoxicated with joy, almost as much as France was. From town to town, from village to village, joyous meetings spontaneously swarmed; hustings were erected in all public places, where the gallantry of our workmen and of our street boys was celebrated with loud hurrahs! In the meantime the *Parisienne* was being sung to every imaginable tune, and played on every instrument; the people were so delighted that they very nearly took the

horses out of the post-chaise which our representative had hired at the hotel where he was staying, with the intention of drawing him themselves.

During a short trip which I took to England a few months later, in no official capacity, and of which I shall speak in its proper place, I found that this enthusiastic outburst of public sympathy had not yet subsided. The English Government could hardly have resisted it, even had they been inclined to do so; but, though they did not share it, yet they did not object to it. The King was the friend of France, and of a liberal spirit, as he soon proved by energetically supporting a plan of reform which far exceeded the bounds of the most sanguine expectations; his Ministers bore Charles X. a grudge for the moral assistance France had afforded the Emperor Nicholas in his war with Turkey, and were animated by no friendly feeling towards M. de Polignac because he had persisted in the expedition to Algiers, in spite of the opposition of England; they therefore saw the breaking up of the intimacy between France and Russia with no small amount of satisfaction, and also were not without hopes of persuading our new Government to abandon a conquest which was not its work. General Baudrand was therefore very well received, and as he only had to break in an

open door, his ability was not put to too severe a test.

The three great Courts of the North would naturally be more difficult to manage. As they had simply adhered to the terms of the Holy Alliance, even in face of the Restoration, our *coup de tête* (freak) must necessarily strengthen their intimacy. Not that they had ever regarded the projects of Charles X. with a favourable eye: on the contrary, they had spared neither good advice nor salutary notices; they had not failed to inform him that he must not reckon on any support from them. But when once the event had taken place, it by no means followed that the recognition of the Revolutionary Government (it is as well to use the proper word) was a matter of course, and should come naturally. Besides the repugnance which kings who had regularly inherited the Crown from their fathers felt to admit a newcomer, or better still, an upstart who was at least regarded with suspicion, into their confraternity, there was the fear of the example, and the danger of the propaganda. It was, therefore, to be expected that the recognition of France should only be the result of a concerted action between the three allies, and should only take place after a preliminary understanding. Until then we were kept in a state of suspense.

General Belliard was sent to Vienna ; Count de Lobau (one of the members of the defunct Commission Municipale), to Berlin ; General Athalin, Aide-de-Camp to the King, to St. Petersburg.

Their instructions were identical.

They were limited to these few words : If Europe does not raise difficulties for us without, we will employ all our efforts to maintain a monarchical form of Government in France, and to repress all propaganda. If it is recognised that France has the right to dispose of herself, she will respect the treaties which for the future form the basis of the European equilibrium.

This language was well received at Berlin, where the name and character of Count de Lobau were well known and generally respected, and it was still better received at Vienna. On her part, Austria agreed not to allow on her territory any intrigues against the new French Government, either from the deposed family, in case it should seek an asylum in Austria, or from the partisans of the young Duke of Reichstadt. M. de Metternich even went so far as to honour us with his good advice. 'There are,' he said to General Belliard, 'two noble obstinate men, of whom both you and we must beware, although they are men of honour and noble gentlemen ; those are King Charles X. and the

Marquis de la Fayette. Your days of July have crushed the foolish dictatorship of the old King, and you will soon be obliged to attack the majesty of M. de la Fayette ; for this, other such days will be required, and not till then will the Prince Lieutenant-Général be really King of France.' This conversation was a good omen, and the anecdote is true, although it was related by M. Capefigue.

Yet the difficulty regarding our recognition rested nevertheless at St. Petersburg, seeing that nothing could be settled between the three allies but in concert, and that however much the Emperor Nicholas might have disapproved of the enterprises of Charles X. before the event, the expulsion of that Prince nevertheless touched him in a sensible point. Charles X. was his good friend, his liege, so to speak ; with the revolution he lost precisely what England gained, and moreover he felt his self-love wounded ; that part of Agamemnon, of King of kings, of the Knight of high principles which he had played before Europe for many years, would be much diminished by the admission of an intruder into the Senate of the Crowned Heads of Europe ; so he had turned his lips away from that cup as much as possible beforehand, and had announced, with much rodomontade, that he would



recognise the Duke of Orleans as Lieutenant-Général nominated by Charles X., and that nothing could force him into a compromise with his honour.

The letter which had to be addressed to him demanded therefore, on the part of the King, a mixture of dignity, reserve and caution which it was difficult to unite. It was drawn up by M. Molé with much skill and moderation; the Cabinet adopted it in its entirety. The text is to be found in the newspapers of the period and in histories, as the secret was not kept, either by us or by him for whom it was destined, and men's tongues were freely wagged over the subject.

Time brings counsel. That letter found the disposition of our autocrat much improved. General Athalin was received not only politely but cordially; he received all the usual and complimentary honours; a fête at Court and a visit to the military colonies. 'I can understand,' the Emperor said to him, 'King Louis-Philippe's situation; I understand the necessity, the devotion and the sacrifice; but what a pity that he has disbanded that noble and faithful royal guard!' This was not the language that our Chargé d'Affaires, M. Bourgoing, had heard at first. The answer of the Emperor, dated from Czarskoë-Selo, September 18, to the King of the Palais Royal, was grave, unimpeachable, without being

affectionate; the word 'brother' was wanting in it, and our King was more vexed than we were about that.

The King of Prussia and his other ally recognised our new Government with the best possible grace; they gave our King a frank shake of the hand without any clawing.

In Italy there were no difficulties; by setting a good example Austria kept the Holy See in the right way; the Duke of Modena, however, refused, and we only laughed at him.

Spain made more fuss: the King allowed M. de Saint-Priest, ambassador of Charles X., to remain at Madrid, in that quality, and to appear at Court with the white cockade in his hat. The Spanish Government even took care to announce that M. de Bourmont, conqueror of Algiers, who had just left the scene of his victory, would come and raise the white flag on the summit of the Pyrenees, and that the Duchess de Berry would join him in person; thus the insignificant tyrant of Spain, who had been restored by our Restoration, very nearly compromised his unsteady crown by his attitude towards our new King.

As a matter of fact, on the first strains of the *Parisienne* all the victims of Ferdinand, all the exiles and all the refugees from his country, had hastened as fast as they could to the frontier in order to prepare for an

armed invasion of Spain. Men bearing the most illustrious names—Martinez de la Rosa, Torreno, San-Miguel, Isturitz, Valdes, Rivas, Mina—lent their approval and their personal authority to the threatened outbreak. They relied upon a committee of French patriots under the semi-official patronage of M. de la Fayette, and it was their full intention to offer the throne of Spain, and even that of Portugal, to the Duke of Nemours by inducing him to marry the Infanta Doña Maria.

We took care to have nothing to do with this affair: we had quite enough of our own on our hands ; besides that, it would have been giving the most daring and flagrant denial to our avowed line of conduct. The Government was satisfied with closing its eyes to the comings and goings of the refugees ; they soon made up a small body on the frontier, and hoped that their presence would suffice to cause Biscay and Navarre to rise ; but no outbreak followed. Yet these threats, slight as they were, sufficed to put an end to the courage and chivalrous generosity of Ferdinand VII. He informed us that he was quite ready to acknowledge the King of the French and to dissolve every Legitimist meeting in his dominions if we would act in the same way towards him ; from that time forward there was no difficulty either on our side or on his. It cost the King

a hundred thousand francs out of his privy purse to release M. de la Fayette from a promise which he had made without consideration; the slight efforts which those poor refugees made had no results, and not the least chance. It might have been otherwise if we had really interfered.

Whilst the King, in concert with us—his frail Ministry—was thus applying himself to settling the state of affairs somewhat, two ominous storms suddenly and simultaneously broke over his head; I mean two catastrophes—the one unforeseen, whereas the other, unfortunately, might easily have been expected.

On the 17th of August, about a fortnight after the 11th—that <sup>is</sup> to say, after the accession of the new dynasty—the last of the Condés, the Duke of Bourbon, was found dead in his room in the very Château of St. Leu where, on the night before the decrees, he had entertained the Duke of Orleans; where, the day after our victory, he had recognised and congratulated the King of the French.

This event was quite unexpected. The Duke of Bourbon had retired to bed at his usual hour, and no noise had interrupted the silence of the night in the château. In the morning, his valet, finding his door locked on the inside, and failing to obtain any answer to

his loud calls and knocks, at last made up his mind to have the door burst open. 'The first thing that met the eyes of those who were present was the body of that unhappy old man hanging by two silk cravats, tied in a double knot, from the knob of the handle of a window in the room.'

At this melancholy news, which was conveyed at once to the Palais Royal, and was at first said to be a stroke of apoplexy, M. Pasquier and M. de Sémonville, accompanied by the Keeper of the Archives of the House of Peers, hastened to St. Leu in order to draw up the certificate of death. They were shown the body in the position in which it was found, caught rather than hanging, with the knees bent, the feet almost touching the carpet; and also the report, drawn up and signed by Count de la Villegontier, First Gentleman of the Chamber of the Prince, and by Count de Choulot, Capitaine-Général des Chasses (Master of the Hunt) of the late Prince. . . . The local Justice and the Avocat-Général arrived immediately to inspect the body and the place. The first physicians and surgeons who were summoned to make or to be present at the post-mortem examination (Marc, Pasquier, and Marjolin), did not hesitate to declare that the death of the Prince, which was caused by strangulation, was due

to suicide. His face was purple, with the tongue protruding between his teeth ; the upper parts of the body showed no other bruise but a slight impress of the cravat ; the legs showed slight abrasions, which were attributed to rubbing against the window or against the chair on which the Prince must have stood, and which was found upset at a very short distance from his feet. On examination, the organs of the stomach and throat presented no unusual appearance, but when the brain was carefully examined, a softening was discovered, which seemed to threaten mental aberration.

I have entered into these details, which have been taken from the official documents themselves, to show how far the excess of party spirit will carry men. It will hardly be believed that, at the first moment, a very large number of honourable and sensible Legitimists were to be found, and they are still to be found, though in very small numbers, who were more inclined to doubt the sincerity of the witnesses, of men of science and of lawyers, than to look upon the death of the Duke of Bourbon as a case of suicide, in order to impute gratuitously, and with a light heart, a murder to King Louis Philippe, the nearest relation of this unfortunate man, his friend, and who had been the only one of his family who hastened to recognise him and to declare

himself his subject ! Certainly, if there was any man in France to whom the life of the Duke of Bourbon must have been precious, and to whom his death was a decided blow in the crisis in which we were, it was our King of yesterday. How much easier would it have been, if even the shadow of a doubt had been possible, to have turned round the accusation and to have imputed the pretended murder to the vengeance of some furious and desperate Legitimists ? But, taking either hypothesis, what answer could there be given to this paper, which was written by the Duke's own hand, and which was found in his own fire-place, amongst a number of other papers which he had thrown there pell-mell on the eve of his death ? It was a proclamation addressed to the inhabitants of St. Leu and was couched in the following terms :

‘ St. Leu and its dependencies belong to your King Louis Philippe ; do not pillage or burn either the castle or the village, and harm nobody, either my friends or my people. You have been misled with regard to me. Nothing remains for me but to be wishing for the happiness and prosperity of the French people and of my country.

‘ P. J. HENRI DE BOURBON, PRINCE DE CONDÉ.

‘ P.S.—I request that I may be buried at Vincennes by the side of my unfortunate son.’

Certainly, such a document shows only too well in what a state of agitation the mind of this poor Prince must have been, weakened as he was by age and illness, troubled by scruples which amounted almost to remorse, and given up in his domestic relations to delusions which were the unhappy fruits of the errors of his old age.

In spite of the strictness of the religious laws against suicide, the funeral of the Duke de Bourbon was conducted just as it would have been under any other circumstances. His heart was deposited in the chapel at Chantilly. His body, which had been embalmed and had lain in state for several days, was received into the church of St. Leu and conveyed to St. Denis, accompanied by a military *cortége*, amidst which the royal carriages figured; the four eldest sons of the King were present. The coffin was received at the abbey doors by the clergy of the diocese; the basilica was hung with black as at royal funerals. After the service had been performed, with the same ceremonial but without a funeral sermon, the body was deposited in the royal vault, by the side of the last Prince de Condé.

The other event, the other catastrophe, was of a very different nature and bearing.

On August 25, eight days after the Prince's death, and a fortnight after our own accession to power, a revolution



broke out in Brussels, which was about to change the existence of the kingdom of the Netherlands and to imperil the state of Europe.

That kingdom, which had been the work of circumstances, of apprehension and of rancour, a two-headed hydra which had been placed by the Congress of Vienna to guard a circle of fortresses which had been erected against us and out of what we had been robbed of—being a hybrid production from an unnatural connection of two millions of Protestant Dutchmen with four millions of Catholic Belgians ; being still more divided by instinct and manners than by faith and language—that kingdom had from the very beginning been threatened with dissolution, and the incompatibility of temper had reached its height when the tocsin of July was sounded in France. How could it be supposed that a numerical majority of more than double, which was treated as a regular slave, ruled and harassed by a minority which was master of the King, of the Court, of the public service and of the army, should not respond to such an appeal ? One evening, an opera tune which was very much in vogue just then, and the singing of the *Parisienne* in the street at the top of men's voices, brought about the matter in a moment, but nevertheless not without conflict and some bloodshed.

I shall go no further concerning the matter itself, or its cause and origin, nor shall I stop to recall the different incidents in the struggle between the King of the Netherlands and his unfortunate new subjects, or to characterise the mixture of fraud and violence which subjected them, for a period of fifteen years, to a compact which the majority rejected and which was morally oppressive. I shall not take the trouble of recording minutely the incessant quarrels about religion, politics, finance, and social economy which could not fail to crop up again and again continually during the union, or rather the forced amalgamation, of such different races, made under such unfortunate auspices.

Neither shall I stop to relate the Revolution of Brussels, copied, so to speak, and as far as it could be, on our own; crowds gathering spontaneously, the useless employment of armed force, barricades being erected one after another; after which came negotiations which were not really sincere, tardy concessions, and ultimately the rising, breaking forth in earnest, and gradually extending from street to street, from town to town.

I shall only lay stress upon the immediate consequences of that event, and on the increase of the difficulties which it brought down upon us, when, heaven knows, we had enough already.

Our new Government had, as yet, been officially recognised by England alone, and although it had been favourably received, in the presence of its agents, at Vienna and Berlin, and besides that, looked upon with favour by most of the Continental Courts and Principalities, the decisive step had still to be taken ; all was as yet in suspense, as long as the great ally of the North, from whom no Power would separate itself, had not said the last word.

In order to obtain that last word from those august lips, we had eagerly declared that, for our part, we intended to accept and to respect the state of Europe, as it had been settled by the fortune of war and the faith of treaties, by fulfilling all the conditions which were due from us towards neighbouring States ; that we wanted no war, no conquests, no revolutionary provocation. We had voluntarily undertaken all this, of course on the understanding that the obligation should be mutual ; but even before we could have any answer, and as it were to take us at our word and to put us to the proof, we had the Belgian revolution on our hands.

Our embarrassment may be imagined ; for what were we going to do ?

It was quite evident that we had nothing to do with that rising ; we neither intended nor did we wish to

support either of the two adversaries ; as a matter of fact, that was quite certain. But yet we were far from being indifferent at what was going on, for the ultimate result of the Belgian outbreak must be the destruction or the maintenance of a state of things which had been imagined against France, the destruction or the maintenance of a *tête de pont* which had ostentatiously been placed across our frontier, according to the picturesque, or rather military, expression of General Lamarque. But on the other hand, this state of things being the wisely prearranged work of the Congress of Vienna, we ran a great risk, if the measures taken by the Congress should be compromised, of seeing the signatories of those measures take strong steps for enforcing their execution, and in that case, what figure should we, poor revolutionaries of the day before, cut, if an armed counter-revolution should take place, under our eyes, at our very gates—a counter-revolution aimed as a warning to us ?

Time was pressing ; we were officially informed that the King of the Netherlands, even before he had altogether lost the game, had made haste, in order to be prepared for any eventualities, to call for help from the Powers who had vouched to maintain the integrity of his possessions ; the position was becoming unbear-

able. What was to be done ? that dilemma was once more staring us in the face. It was a case of risking everything except honour and good sense.

The principle of non-intervention carried us through the affair, and became our life-boat in this fresh storm, although we had to interpret that principle rather strictly, or rather, to stretch its letter a little.

Everybody knows that that principle is to States what the principle of personal liberty is to individuals. I am master in my own house ; no one has a right to come in without my knowledge ; there, I act as I think best for my own interests, and no one has the right to call me to account as long as I do not do him any harm. If my neighbour breaks open my door and claims the right of meddling in my affairs, I not only have the right to oppose his intrusion, but I have the right, in order to check it, to call any other neighbour to my assistance, as all have an indirect but legitimate interest in the maintenance of the personal liberty of each person, and in the security of each domicile. It is the same between States ; each within itself, each for itself ; all, however, in case of need, for or against each one, according as the occasion may require.

We determined to invoke this principle in order to meet the requirements of the situation. As long as the

work of the Congress of Vienna was maintained we were bound to respect it; as long as the King of the Netherlands was master in his own country and made his Belgian subjects obey him, we were obliged to let him act as he pleased. But if the work of the Congress of Vienna were recoiled upon itself, if the separation between Holland and Belgium were to be brought about by intrinsic force, and if the King of Holland were to call in a third party to cement the union afresh, nothing, in our opinion, prohibited Belgium from doing the same, in an opposite sense; it might be blow for blow, intervention for intervention, for we were under no obligation to remain with our arms folded, and to allow a state of things which threatened our independence and our security to be established under our eyes by third parties.

I do not say that the argument was altogether perfect, or that the parity of reasoning between the two alleged cases was strict. I do not say that the signatories of the Treaty of Vienna would have nothing to say in the destruction of their work, but for that very reason it was necessary for them to agree beforehand, and to act in concert. That gave us time, and for us time was everything.

We informed the English Government that, in case

of the incorporation of Belgium with France being proposed to us by our former compatriots, the offer would not be accepted ; that the demarcation of our frontier would not be passed, and that the establishment of a new kingdom of Belgium would, with our knowledge and full consent, remain an altogether European question.

That sufficed as far as that went.

At Vienna, M. de Metternich, who, however, did not understand any trifling with the principle of non-intervention, understood with his practical good sense that nothing must be pushed to extremities, and that here it was a case of *summum jus, summa injuria*.

Thus only Prussia remained to be dealt with.

There remained the heir, such as he was, of Frederick the Great ; he was brother-in-law of the King of the Netherlands, and thus doubly his ally, besides being geographically within reach of the battleground ; he responded to the appeal, took the common cause in hand, and hastened to assemble an army to assist him.

On receipt of this news our Council unanimously decided to ascertain what truth there was in it. In the name of the King, M. Molé, our Minister for Foreign Affairs, called on M. de Werther, the Prussian

Minister under Charles X., who was staying in Paris until further orders from his Court, and informed him categorically that if any Prussian army threatened to enter Belgium it would meet a French army there to dispute the territory with it, and begged him to inform his Court of this, and to allow no doubt to exist about the matter. Thereupon there was a great deal of noise, much crying out, a great show of menace and of demonstrations, but that was all; M. de Werther continued his voluntary interim whilst waiting for his letters credential, and the settlement of the Belgian question, after some vicissitudes always unavoidable in such cases, was definitely transmitted to London, and committed to the care of a Conference which had been assembled there for some months to examine the Greek question.

That was not bad for a first attempt.

I will now return to our home affairs. Although we were not too much concerned at the state of effervescence which became evident directly after August 11 among the working classes—a state which might be looked upon rather as a continuation of previous excitement than as a prelude to any threatening future—although we did not grudge the price of the good offices which the popularity of M. de la Fayette and of M. Dupont



(of the Eure) was rendering us in that respect, we were moving step by step from breaker to breaker. We heard with consternation that, in consequence of the public clamour, some of the fugitive Ministers had been arrested, and were kept in safe custody : M. de Polignac at Granville, where he was on the point of embarking, M. Peyronnet, M. Chantelauze, and M. Guernon-Ranville in the neighbourhood of Tours. Of course, we would gladly have avoided this, at our own risk and peril. But as the thing was done, the crime was too flagrant, the blood which had been shed was still too fresh, and indignation too universal for it to be possible for us to close our eyes to such a capture without seeming to take their part and becoming their accomplices ; the more so, that the same day, August 13, M. Eusèbe Salverte had laid on the table of the Chamber of Deputies a proposal to impeach the former Ministry, whilst M. de Tracy, whose intentions were more humane and generous, but really somewhat analogous, laid on the table a proposal to abolish capital punishment.

The prisoners were transferred to Vincennes in the night between August 26 and 27 ; thanks to that precaution, not only were their persons in safety, but they were spared insults and curses.

The next day but one the King, for the first time, reviewed the National Guard on the Champ de Mars, and distributed the tri-coloured flag to them. More than 60,000 men, armed and equipped from head to foot, thronged around him, and responded to his appeal by their shouts.

It was a holiday for everyone, and for us it was a day of truce.

The first sittings of the two Chambers were, taking it all in all, more interesting than important. The first question was, how far would the inevitable obligation of taking the oath thin the ranks in the two Chambers, and it was a question of persons, unavoidably seasoned with hesitations, explications, retractations, regrets, which naturally gave occasion for chatter, and which, however illustrious may have been the speakers, was soon consigned to oblivion, thus leaving no trace behind, except in the memory of the actors in the debate.

The House of Peers, mutilated as it was by the new Charter, consisted of only 83 members at the beginning of the Session; this was something; in fact, it was a good deal, seeing its original composition and the recent weeding it had been subjected to. The numbers increased by degrees, by successive arrivals,

and by the unexpected return of others to the House.

It was quite the other way in the Chamber of Deputies; at the opening, only 8 Deputies sent in their resignation; but in the next few days, 40 or 50 others thought better of it, and followed their example.

Uncertainty on such a delicate point could not be borne. It was equally adverse to the dignity of all parties concerned, King, Peers and Deputies. It was soon agreed (August 19 and 23), not without some wry faces, that a delay of a fortnight should be granted to the Deputies, and one of a month to the members of the House of Peers, to make up their minds, after the expiration of which delay they should be looked upon as having resigned. With regard to the latter, that is, to the Peers, the measure was to be personal, and not to apply to their heirs.

But then came the necessity for replacing the Deputies who had resigned; how was this to be done? on what principle and according to what law?

‘A serious question presents itself,’ said M. Guizot, in the Chamber of Deputies, on August 14; ‘important modifications are announced in our own electoral legislation; they could not be carried in time to allow of the

elections, which are pending at present, taking place according to the new rules. These elections are necessarily governed by law, for laws exist as long as they are neither formally abrogated nor changed, and one of the chief requirements of society is, that where no absolute and irresistible necessity intervenes, its legal life shall go on without interruption. But the electoral laws which are still in force contain one principle which is so strongly disapproved of by public feeling, and whose speedy abolition has been so loudly called for, that there would be striking inconsistency in allowing it to be applied, and that is the principle of the double vote. Although it is very desirable that they should be promptly settled, the other questions can and ought to be put off so as to allow a general and searching debate on the Bills which have been announced. The double vote is no longer a question; having been abolished in principle by the Charter, it ought now to disappear in reality.'

It is quite evident that, without insisting in the Council that we should persist in giving umbrage to the prejudices which, at the moment, were felt towards the double vote, I myself should not have spoken in such terms about it.

The situation of the House of Peers was very pre-

carious; it therefore lost no time in proving its hereditary character, such as it was, by summoning M. de Sesmaisons (Donatien) to the Chamber as heir of a resigned Peer; its liberalism by abrogating, *pro parte quâ*, the law of sacrilege, and its political manhood by authorizing the formal arrest of M. de Polignac and of M. de Peyronnet, who had been seized and detained through the popular clamour.

These signs of life did no more than half strengthen it.

The position of the public powers, if the expression can be used, was settled, at least provisionally, and the first foundations of the new *régime* were laid as *pierres d'attente*; it remained for us to do the same as regarded our relations with Foreign Powers, as soon as the latter should successively recognise us.

Marshal Mortier was sent as ambassador to St. Petersburg; Marshal Maison to Vienna; my old friend Rumigny to Berlin; the Duc d'Harcourt to Madrid; M. de Barante to Turin; M. de Latour-Maubourg to Rome; M. Bertin de Vaux to the Hague; M. Sérurier to Washington. All these nominations, which were concerted between the King and M. Molé, were agreed to without difficulty by the Council and thought well of by the public; but our Ambassador in England became a source of trouble within and without.

In his heart, our King had intended this important post for M. de Talleyrand, or, if my readers prefer it, and, perhaps, to speak more correctly, had destined M. de Talleyrand for that post. I knew it without his having told me, and seemingly the object of his choice knew it, like myself, without requiring much divination.

The King was right, in fact.

England was the Power which really wished us well, and the only one on which, to a certain extent, we could reasonably count. The Liberal movement which had been imprinted on English politics by Mr. Canning, in 1827, had not expired with that statesman when he was removed too soon, alas ! for the good cause ; for three years this movement had been acting on the Tory reaction (there action of Wellington and Peel), fettered, or better, perhaps, checked rather than suspended. The party of reform continued to gain adherents amongst the Opposition, as did the necessity of reforms in the Ministry itself. In the eyes of both, we had the twofold merit of the justice and of the success of our cause. Consequently in London we had to look for, and might hope to find, a support against the open ill will or the suspicious good will of other Governments, the more so as London was, at the moment, thanks to the intervention of Europe in the affairs

of the East, the centre and the home of European politics.

But, in order to profit by these advantages, clear sight, moderation and assurance were required ; a clear-headed man, and one who could carry weight with him, and was known as such, was required.

A good revolutionary of 1830, whether he were on this side of the Channel a favourite speaker, an eminent banker, or a veteran of the Grand Army (all our illustrious men were about of that stamp), would, according to all appearance, have given vent to his commonplaces as a tribune, to his petty glories of the National Guard, or to his anger at the defeat of Waterloo. If he had gone too far in popular demonstrations, he would soon have lost all credit with a Tory Ministry, which was still firmly established, without gaining any in the future with a possible Whig Ministry, since Lord Grey was, no more than the Duke of Wellington, likely to allow himself to be taught by a *newly arrived upstart* ; and if, as would almost certainly have happened, this newly made patriot had shown signs of meddling with other people's affairs, of approving or blaming this or that in London, and of taking one side or the other, there would have been a general outcry against him, and his position would have become untenable.

But, on the contrary, in order to gain our end, it was necessary that we should raise our flag without displaying it, that we should take our seat amongst the diplomatic body without seeming to force our way in, that we should disarm mistrust without daring it, and that we should respond to courteous proceedings without seeking protection.

It was a difficult and delicate task, and our future was at stake; the position which we might acquire in the eyes of the signatories of the Holy Alliance—that is to say, of the principal Cabinets of the Continent—depended on the position which we took in England.

M. de Talleyrand was an aristocrat even more by nature than by birth, more by instinct than by manners and social habits. Whether it was a good quality or a defect (one or the other, or rather, one and the other to a certain degree), that indelible original trait in his character, that *ingenium*—if I may be excused for employing the Latin word—had dominated all the adventures of his strange existence, and forced him upon us, after it had forced him upon everything that he encountered on his way for nearly half a century, whether it were persons or things, people of all sorts, men of high or low station, honest or the contrary, red caps or crowned heads.

He had been at heart a drawing-room prelate up to



1789, the confidant and intimate friend of Mirabeau at the Assemblée Constituante—a bishop who handed over the Church to miscreants; who robbed it of its property; who consecrated with his own hands, without any coadjutor, the first priests who took the oath of allegiance to the Revolution; and who celebrated his last Mass on the Champ-de-Mars at the altar of the nation. Nevertheless, the body of constituents, who saw the fault they had committed after the escapade to Varennes, chose him to negotiate quietly with the English Government for some demonstration in favour of the unfortunate prisoner of the Tuileries.

Although he was without any official character in London, and acted there as simple mentor to the real titular ambassador, who was so in little else than in name, Mr. Pitt and Lord Granville admitted him alone and confidentially to their discussions over this rather difficult proposal.

Whether he liked it or not, he was banished after the catastrophe of January 21. However, after his return from a very short exile, the Jacobins of the Directory tolerated him, whilst cursing his gentlemanly fine airs, in order to give some prestige to their Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Having soon been carried away in the rout of his wretched patrons, he nevertheless found himself safe on

the 18th Brumaire, extending his hand to the First Consul, which the victor of Arcola eagerly took, whilst directing Talleyrand to establish at once good relations between the new Government and some of the foreign Powers, and alas! later on, by an ever memorable circular, to justify the decoy and the murder of the Duc d'Enghien.

From that time forward, he went on from treaty to treaty, like his master from victory to victory, imposing the law of the conqueror on the conquered, until the day when he himself fell into disgrace because of his having advised the Emperor to halt half way in his foolish enterprises in Spain; when he remained a dignitary of the declining empire, just as twenty years previously he had remained a dignitary of a Church in ruins, but nevertheless on both occasions preserving a position, an attitude, and an amount of authority which still aroused the envy of persons of the highest rank.

I myself, at the Congress of Prague, in 1812, saw M. de Metternich, then at the zenith of his power, imitate M. de Talleyrand to such a degree that one might almost have confounded the two.

But that was a small matter.

When at last the day of invasion and of defeat came upon us, this Prince of Benevento, of Imperial manufacture, might have been seen openly working for the

overthrow of the Empire, and that in the very face of the Emperor, who accused him of it, in his rough voice, before the whole Court. Later on, he received the victorious monarchs on their entry into Paris, and offered his own mansion to the Emperor Alexander with an almost royal hospitality. He also insisted on the restoration of the Bourbons, and dictated the conditions of the Charter; and later, he, an unfrocked Bishop, became Prime Minister of his most Christian Majesty; then, as ex-Grand Elector of the Empire, he took part in the Congress of Vienna, where the spoils of that Empire were divided, and almost caused a rupture of the alliance between the conquerors. When the news of the landing at Cannes was received, he bound this alliance together again; and if not as its leader, certainly as its follower, he helped again to dethrone the Emperor, and, for the second time, to place the crown on the head of Louis XVIII. Then, having again fallen into disgrace, though still remaining at the head of one of the most important offices at Court, he tried for fifteen years to get over his disgrace, in order, so to speak, to keep up his practice—unsuccessfully, it is true, but yet unceasingly, and just as if he were waiting for the moment when once more, surviving his own work, he should be allowed to follow

to the grave, in the person of our restored King, the infant for which he had twice stood sponsor.

I shall never forget as long as I live, how, as I was going along the Rue de Rivoli, about six o'clock in the evening on the second day of the Revolution of July, and whilst the distant noise of the musketry fire was being heard in the distance, seeing M. de Talleyrand at the window of his mezzanine floor, I went up, in order to tell him what little I myself knew. He asked me to stay to dinner, with two or three other guests who were rather insignificant ; but, at dessert, the English Ambassador, Sir Charles Stuart, arrived. He and Talleyrand had a long interview, and seeing the crisis we had come to, they felt no embarrassment at my being present, and what they said to one another about what was sure to happen was certainly not said by men who spoke about it to each other for the first time.

It was, therefore, nothing extraordinary—it was even only natural—that we should think of confiding our newly-born Government to hands which were so experienced in changing evolutions, such clever judges of men and things, so accustomed to face any incident, in order that they might guide it in its first steps, and obtain for it in Europe some sort of credit, however limited. M. de Talleyrand knew England well, at least

as far as its principal personages were concerned, and he was himself well known there. He was still better acquainted with the Ministers and diplomatists who were thronging to the Conference of London. He had more than once met them, eyed them, measured them, either in Paris or in some other capital of the Continent. in turn as the humble servants, the auxiliaries, or as the enemies of the common master. None amongst them had a grander bearing or was thought more of than him, fallen though he had been, in France, for the last fifteen years ; none was more free from prejudice, or could take a higher view of public affairs when dealing with them. He had the reputation of being a consummate statesman, and he deserved it, in this way, that he was endowed with the power of grasping, quickly and surely, under the most difficult circumstances, the position which ought to be taken, and, after having taken it up, to allow it to work its way, calmly waiting for the consequences. Thus it was, when he arrived at Vienna in 1815, without even being certain that he would be admitted to the Congress, that he managed not only to take his place at the table, but to direct the negotiators, first by dividing, and then by swaying them. We might look for some service of this sort from him now, but it was necessary that his good offices should be requested and accepted for that purpose;

besides, to choose Prince Talleyrand as our representative in London was creditable for patriots like ourselves, who had just escaped from the Revolution. It seemed an enormity to the popular fatuity of M. Laffitte, to a stuck-up rustic like M. Dupont (of the Eure), or to the thick-nailed shoes of M. Dupin ; it was too much for the arrogant and vulgar mob, which thought it might dictate to us, and which was not altogether wrong.

To help him in this idea of his the King had only M. Guizot, who, as Minister of the Interior, bore all the burden and heat of the day, and myself, unfortunate Duke as I was, tolerably compromised as such, and suspected for more than one reason besides.

M. Molé was the most reluctant amongst us, but this from personal reasons, and which were totally different from those of the others. M. Molé with his natural sagacity,—it perhaps did not require very much in this case,—saw clearly that when once the centre of politics should be firmly established in London under the guidance of M. de Talleyrand, everything would be managed directly between such an important personage and the King, although it would, of course, have to be debated in a secret conclave between the King, Madame Adélaïde, his sister, and General Sebastiani, who was the confidant of both. To be

Minister *in partibus* was certainly no suitable position for a man of M. Molé's position and merits.

So he tried with all his might to dispel the fits of weariness and disgust which his position used to cause him ; but when we were alone, he opened his mind to me, because, as has been seen, he owed me his post, which he thought was more apparent than real. But I could do nothing in the matter ; I could only tell him what had been said to me on my first appearance in society by M. de Sainte Foix, an old man full of refinement and experience, and who was well known at that time : 'Remember that one should never have anything to do with human affairs, not even with one's own, if not prepared to pass an unpleasant quarter of an hour. . . . Besides that,' I added, 'the unpleasant quarter of an hour is not for you alone, and does not depend on such or such a choice ; in this case, the question is not whether any one of us will make a reputation or prove his ability, but merely whether we shall keep in office for a sufficiently long time. We are nothing but bags full of earth, as the sappers say ; all we have to do is to stop a hole which without us would remain wide open, and through which anything might pass ; as best we can, we are making our successors' beds, and may they only very soon occupy them !'

My consolation did not comfort my interrogator very much ; but as he was right, he provisionally listened to reason. I also, more or less, worked on our patriots by affording them small pleasures at the expense of my unfortunate public business ; by yielding to them on points which I should have been very much tempted to defend, with regard to the employments and the employés whom I intended to protect, and whom to a certain extent I ought to have protected, against the demands of the reaction. But God will judge us according to His justice and mercy, as said M. Royer Collard when excusing certain acts to which even the most respectable men had been reduced in 1793. In short, M. de Talleyrand became our ambassador ; I got a little bruised (that is morally) in the contest, and this selection, *valeat quantum*, was useful to us without producing any very bad result.

I have related how I preserved the very existence of the Conseil d'Etat from the storm which threatened it in the mind of the King, and from the claws of the *Garde des Sceaux*, who was preparing to parcel it out so as to profit the tribunals and the various elective offices. From August 13, M. Dupont set himself to work, and M. Isambert, his collaborator, a good man on the whole, but wooden-headed if ever a man was



so, had sharply lectured poor Hochet, who was secretary of this Council *in extremis*, and had also begun to set to work ; anyone can judge of what was coming from the letter which, whether he liked it or not, he was obliged to send to me, when forwarding the outline of his work.

I at once set this to rights.

On August 20, I submitted a short but clear and substantial report to the King, in which, after stating the nature of the Conseil d'Etat as the mainspring of monarchical institutions, I pointed out in categorical terms the necessity, in the present circumstances, of proclaiming its preservation, as also how urgent it was to restore life and action to it without delay.

This report, which met with the royal assent, was inserted in full in the *Moniteur*.

The same day, I got the King to sign a decree which put the former Conseil d'Etat on its old footing, though remodelled on a new plan as to its powers, and much altered as to its composition.

I did not, however, manage to do all this at once, or without some very hard struggles.

As every Conseil d'Etat was in fact the headquarters of the Government to which it belonged, as it was the *élite* of its soldiery, the depository of its traditions, the

confidant of its secrets, and, in fact, the very soul of its policy, when a Government was overturned the members of its Conseil d'Etat would naturally be eager to resign and leave no trace of their occupancy behind them ; this ought to be a matter of principle and a point of honour.

But it is not always so, and examples are not wanting of too zealous servants, who, grumbling all the while, yet take a new lease from the new landlord.

Such was the case in this instance.

Out of forty-five titular Conseillers only two, M. de Tournon and M. Delamalle resigned ; out of thirty-two Maîtres des Requêtes only three, M. de Nugent, M. Cormenin, and M. Prévost, did likewise.

Now, as a certain number of these personages were engaged up to the hilt in active politics, and as several of them had even been compromised in the drawing up of the fatal decrees, it was quite clear that an elimination was necessary, and would fall to my lot. I undertook it much against my inclination, sincerely intending to reduce it within the strict limits of prudence and of capabilities, and to retain all those who could be useful to us there.

But now arose my first difficulty. The larger the number of members retained, the smaller became that of vacancies to be filled ; seats in the Conseil d'Etat

J. P. MOLLIER TRIED TO SAVE  
MEMBERS OF RIST

were looked upon as choice morsels, and so every one of my colleagues in the Ministry had his own protégés to propose, each of whom had valid reasons to bring forward, on his own account, against each of those whom I wished to retain, reasons which, though not more solid, were certainly more specious than mine, as equity, moderation, the regard for vested interests and positions, to which their owners were entitled by long and useful services, are hardly treated with fairness in times of revolution.

Thus I was often, or to speak truly, constantly beaten in the Cabinet on this battle-ground; and if any one will take the trouble to cast his eyes over the list of Conseillers and of *Maitres des Requêtes* who had been dispossessed, that is to say—according to the usual formulary—who had been allowed to make good their claim to retire, will not wonder at the slight success which my resistance met with.

I lost there several auxiliaries whose knowledge, good sense, and experience would have been very useful to me. Above all, I lost one friend who was very dear to me, and for whom I fought a desperate battle, M. Victor Masson, who had been the principal author of that excellent French method of keeping public accounts, of which M. Mollien, in his time, had

laid the first foundations. I had worked with M. Masson as a mere amateur. His was a very superior mind in matters of administration, of finance and of political economy. Under M. de Villèle he had been the *rapporteur* of the Bill relating to the conversion of the *rentes*; and this was laid to his charge. I had hoped that M. Laffitte, who partly proposed that unfortunate measure, would support me in defending his own defender, but he was one of the first to abandon us. When I was obliged to inform my poor friend of our common misadventure, I saw great tears rolling down his cheeks, which were haggard from age and work; my own eyes were not very dry, and I was very nearly throwing off the load with which I had allowed myself to be burdened.

I had my revenge, however, when the new Council was formed; I mean at the fresh appointment of those who were maintained in office, and in the choice of those who were newly summoned, and, in the presence of the King, I formally declared to my colleagues that if it were their intention to impose their creatures upon me, and at once to stock the Administration with novices or with brawlers, they would have to find some one else to fill my post. I maintained my position, come what might, and the Council which

was the definite result of our deliberations was about the same which I had proposed.

I set a good example by only admitting one of my own personal friends, M. Renouard, who was a highly esteemed barrister, and who has since become one of the most honoured members of the Court of Cassation. What I mean by personal friend here, is a man who at that period had nothing to entitle him to attain to the highest rank, except the rare qualities which he has since shown. Several more of my political friends were naturally appointed on account of their position and of their celebrity : M. Villemain, M. Duchâtel, M. Salvandy. Amongst the journalists, I only proposed, and got admitted, M. Thiers and M. Mignet. The councillors who were retained were nearly all men of tried merit : M. Allent, M. de Gérando, M. Maillard, M. Mounier, M. Hély d'Oissel, M. d'Argout, M. Kératry, M. Brevannes, M. Haxo, M. Béranger, M. Fréville, M. Calmon, and M. Delaire.

This, however, was only a provisional organization, for on the same day (August 20) I caused a commission to be nominated, which was entrusted with the preparation of the definite organization. It was a picked committee, and consisted of M. Béranger, M. d'Argout, M. Devaux, M. Vatimesnil, M. Zangiacomi, M.

Fréville, M. Macarel, M. Rémusat, and I appointed M. Benjamin Constant as chairman, but he did not choose to honour the committee with his presence.

I was not particularly sorry for this, as he would have done us more harm than good, as he understood nothing about administrative affairs, either as a whole or in detail, and as he, above all, understood nothing about French administration, he would have made us lose much valuable time, every moment of which had to be reckoned ; our sessions would have been spent in teaching him what he did not know, and in refuting the objections which he might have taken it into his head to raise.

I myself took the chair of this committee almost daily during my short tenure of office. I threw myself into it with all my heart ; I had thought a great deal, and written a little as to the aim of its work, and I did not despair altogether about leaving some traces of my personal views behind me, for what they might be worth. I will soon explain what came of it when I relate the whole of the operations which were officially entrusted to my care, but before anything else I must take up the thread of public affairs again, and rapidly follow out their development.

We experienced great difficulty in leaving the *statu*

*quo*, and by that expression I mean the measure which definitely allowed those who were banished in 1816 to return to France, because it seemed indispensable not to extend such permission to the members of the Bonaparte family.

I also mean the report which the Minister of the Interior laid before the two Chambers, as to the general changes which had been effected, not only as regarded the members, but also the material of the public service during the first month of our Ministry.

This report, or rather this communication, which had no settled character or official title, was hardly anything else than an answer to the flood of solicitations with which we were inundated, to the general irregular demands for places, and to the repeated and incessant denunciations of those functionaries who were said to be Carlists.\* That was the crime of the hour ; when each of us had emptied his bag into the common fund and proved that, in his own particular department, he had acted vigorously, and that his hand had not spared anybody, we hoped to get off like that. But that was a vain hope ; our communication was very badly received, for the very reason that its object was to close the door against all pretensions ; the Carlist

\* Partisans of the fallen King.

hunt, that is to say, really, the rush for places, went on more than ever, until one day one of the leaders in that hungry pack shouted out in a resonant voice, 'Do you gentlemen on the Ministerial Benches really know what a Carlist is?' To that we unanimously answered, 'A Carlist is a man who occupies a post which another man wishes to obtain.'

This was received by a general outburst of laughter, and obtained for us two or three days' respite.

In passing, and so as to show that we really were progressing—a progress which was latent and in keeping with constitutional institutions—I will call attention to the line of conduct which we adopted ; quite of our own accord, and without by any means being called upon to do so, we submitted to the Chamber the number of the contingent which should be called out every year to recruit the army. As I said, at the proper place, this had been a great subject of debate between the Doctrinaire Party and the Ministry in 1818. Then we were defeated ; now, as we were the conquerors, we did what we had then demanded with a good grace, though practically the matter was one of very little importance.

I will also remark in passing that a credit of sixty millions was opened for the Minister of Finance in order to enable him to make advances for industrial



purposes in the crisis through which we were passing (this measure must indeed have been very necessary for M. Louis to have agreed to it), and that later credits amounting to sixty-seven millions four hundred and ninety thousand francs were voted to meet the expenses of the expedition to Algiers. It must be borne in mind that that expedition, which was undertaken by the Government that had been overthrown, in its own interests and contrary to the wishes and to the advantage of the country, was not so popular then as it has since, to my regret, become, and it was very nearly being made one of the counts in the indictment at the trial of the Ministers.

At last that unfortunate trial, which was to prepare and hasten our fall, came on; not that that was a particular evil for any of us, but nevertheless it again imperilled society, which had only just escaped from the scenes of disorder through which it had passed.

It came on preceded by various incidents which it will suffice to mention here.

August 26, an amnesty for all who had been condemned for political offences.

August 30, those who had fought in the Revolution of July, as well as their wives and children, were to be recompensed.

September 5, a report was presented to the King by the ex-municipal commission, dealing with its work and operations during its short and laborious interim.

September 11, the revision of the electoral lists.

September 20, a procession of young patriots bore the busts of Manuel and of Foy in triumph to St. Geneviève, which had again become the Pantheon, and could scarcely be persuaded to leave them in the Hôtel de Ville, at the request, and to the care, of Odilon Barrot.

September 21, another expiatory procession in honour of the anniversary of the conspiracy of La Rochelle, and in view of the rehabilitation of the four young sergeants who had been executed on that day, paraded the streets of the capital; M. de la Fayette proposed to engrave the names of the sergeants amongst those of the great men who are entitled to public gratitude, and he had military honours paid to the procession.

It is right to add that he seized the occasion to have a petition against the penalty of death signed, and that several thousands of names belonging to all classes of society were affixed to it.

At last, on September 23, a committee which had been nominated *ad hoc* on the proposal of M. de Salverte, laid before the Chamber of Deputies the result of its inquiry into the acts laid to the charge of the accomplices (this

term is unfortunately only too correct) of the fallen King, and took upon itself to commence the prosecution.

This report was presented by M. Béranger, an enlightened and liberal magistrate, most favourably regarded by all parties.

The state of men's minds and the evidence of facts was such that this committee did not hesitate to set itself up, of its own accord, into a *Chambre d'Instruction*, with this one exception, that it demanded from the Chamber which had appointed it the powers which it lacked in order to proceed further, and which were also accorded it without any hesitation. As I took care to point out on another occasion, this was derogatory to every principle, but nobody felt any scruples about the matter, nobody even remarked it. Everything was done in accordance with the rules of legal procedure: warrants, summonses, the seizure of papers and of everything corroborative of evidence and so on.

When I read over this document again, which is inserted in full in the *Annuaire* of 1830, and when I see to what an extent history, polemics and politics contrast in it with the severe impartiality of legal forms, the reserve of judicial language, and the presumption of innocence, I cannot help being struck more and more by the scandal and the danger of arming a public

informer with powers that ought to belong to justice alone.

The committee determined to put all the Ministers who had signed the decrees on their trial for high treason.

Four of them, M. de Polignac, M. de Peyronnet, M. de Chautelauze, M. de Guernon-Ranville, had been arrested, and were detained at Vincennes.

The three others, M. de Montbel, M. d'Haussez, and M. Capelle, had escaped out of France.

The debate was adjourned to September 29.

This look-out did not suit us at all; a storm was threatening in our ranks, and outside it was raging, on account of the popular societies with which we were beginning to be infested.

Already the society of the *Friends of the People*, which met every evening in the Pellier Riding School, had passed a resolution the object of which was to call on the working men and on the National Guard to drive the Deputies from the Palais Bourbon, and the Peers from the Luxembourg. When they were summoned before the Correctional Police, as the heads of an illegal association, M. Hubert, the president, and M. Thierry, his secretary, refused to appear, under the pretext that article 294 of the Penal Code had been implicitly abrogated.

This claim was timidly sustained within the Cabinet by M. Laffitte and M. Dupont, and timidly in the Chamber by the most honest members of the Left. M. Guizot, having been challenged on this ground, replied victoriously, amidst great applause from the Right; and the mercantile quarter of Paris, where the new club held its sittings, did still more, if not better; the principal shop-keepers and the chief part of the National Guard laid hands on the riding-school, and turned the audience out of doors. Justice did not intervene till after this was done, and sentenced the recalcitrants to three months' imprisonment and a fine of 300 francs.

But the matter did not rest there!

Benjamin Constant, who was a member of the Government, since he had a seat in the Conseil d'Etat as President of a Section, without explaining himself about the legality of article 294, took the part of popular assemblies, and maintained that their seditious language was more than justified by the weakness of the Ministry, and the imprudent consideration which had been extended to the conquered party.

Encouraged by this good example, and enjoying a greater latitude owing to his position, M. Mauguin quickly demanded, in terms which would have caused him to be called to order by any other president than

M. Laffitte, that an inquiry should be instituted into the state of the country and the conduct of the Ministry; a proposal which was not thrown out by the order of the day, but which was adjourned to September 29.

This was the first check which we received, and showed that our majority was timid, even if it did not mean to abandon us altogether, and under these auspices the debate on the committal of the Ministers came on.

It only lasted one day.

The defence, which was undertaken loyally, and sustained boldly by the principal members of the Right, did not rest on the foundation of the matter itself, for the decrees were soon disposed of; but on this proposition, which was more specious than solid, namely, that the fact of throwing the responsibility for the acts which he had forced upon his Ministers on Charles X., implicitly freed the former from all responsibility; and that to punish them would be *bis in idem*.

This was a mistake: Charles X. had not been punished, and his Ministers must be.

His deposition was no punishment, it was a divorce—a divorce which had been made inevitable by the nature of the royal person and the course of events—a divorce the very opposite of the marriage between the

French nation and the House of Bourbon, quite justifiable and legitimate reciprocally between France and the House of Bourbon, and carried as far as that of its consequences which made it necessary, but no further.

That was perfectly understood.

The votes on each head of the accusation were taken by standing or sitting, and by a secret scrutiny with regard to each of the accused.

The result of the scrutiny was as follows :

	FOR	AGAINST
M. de Polignac - - -	244	47
M. de Peyronnet - - -	232	54
M. de Chantelauze - - -	222	75
M. de Guernon-Ranville -	215	76
M. d'Haussez - - -	213	65
M. Capelle - - -	202	61
M. de Montbel - - -	187	69

No one can tell what would have happened if all the seven had remained with Charles during his journey from Rambouillet to Cherbourg ; whether their presence would have compromised the person of the King, or whether his presence would have assured their escape.

On the appointed day, September 29, the arena was opened in the Chamber of Deputies in which the quarrel between the Ministry and the Opposition was to be settled, that is to say, between what was already

beginning to be called the party of resistance and that of progress, between those who were satisfied and those who were not, between those who had no other wish but to close the revolution and to rest satisfied with the result, and those who claimed to follow up the consequences of it and to carry them to extremes.

These two parties did not exist only in the Chamber : they possessed noisy adherents throughout the country, and tacit supporters in the Ministry itself. M. Laffitte, M. Dupont (of the Eure) and M. Bignon were inclined towards progress, that is to say, to enforce the exclusion of all who had served the fallen *régime* more and more rigorously, and to extend social and political reforms more and more widely ; the other Ministers clung to resistance, that is to say, to impartiality and to consideration towards individuals, and to the defence, inch by inch, of what remained to us of the principles of order and of guarantees.

Seeing that, considering the circumstances in which we were, the debate was what the English call ominous, that is to say, pregnant with immediate or near consequences—seeing, also, at that moment, that nobody had decided on breaking with anybody else—the attack which was apparently directed against the whole Ministry was naturally only intended for the party of



resistance ; it was the latter that would chiefly be called upon to defend the general conduct, which could only be done satisfactorily by entrusting with that duty those amongst its members who were least compromised, and who still retained some small share of popularity ; this, indeed, was what took place.

Having been explained by its author, the proposal of M. Mauguin turned out to be nothing else but a formal accusation. Besides a few compliments to M. Dupont (of the Eure), it contained a whole programme of government, just as practical as the government of Salentum, which so pleases children when they learn to read out of *Télémaque*.

M. Dupont was particularly congratulated for having prepared the way for a civil war between the new tribunals and the members of the bench (magistrature-assise), which was composed of judges appointed by Charles X. ; the other Ministers, and above all, the Minister of Finance, had been guilty of not having made a clean sweep of all the clerks and other employés who were able to draw up a deed and to do book-keeping by double entry, and also for not having changed the whole aspect of the country by a stroke of the pen or a wave of the wand.

Being produced in this manner, the indictment did

not prove a success, and was often interrupted by bursts of laughter. It was scarcely supported by M. de Salverte and by Benjamin Constant, who only saw in it an occasion for assuming a hostile attitude against the Government to which he belonged; in short, after having incurred the sarcasms and the whims of M. Dupin, it was in the end rather awkwardly withdrawn by its author. But the event of the sitting was the speech of M. Casimir Perier which wound it up.

M. Perier, in his turn taking up the semi-utopian and revolutionary plan of conduct alluded to by M. Mauguin, thoroughly cut it up, and justly held its author to scorn, and haughtily pointed out himself the plan which alone ought to be followed. He did this with broad oratory, with a mixture of lofty views and authoritative language, which were a worthy prelude to the part which was reserved for him, and to the post which he was soon to occupy.

He was universally applauded, and scored a great success; yet it was a success, though it prepared the way for our fall, by making the rivalry between M. Perier and M. Laffitte more difficult to overcome.

It was a rivalry of long standing, and dated from the best days of the Restoration.

They were both bankers, both rich, and men who

spent their money profusely ; being both Liberals and popular men, they had both taken an equal share in party strife and in the revolution. The first meeting of Deputies was held at the house of M. Perier, and most of the subsequent meetings at M. Laffitte's. M. Perier had been the principal member of the Municipal Commission, and M. Laffitte had been most inclined to push the revolution to its bitter end. When the Chamber of Deputies had assembled in sufficient numbers so as to form a quorum, the votes for the Presidency were divided between the two. M. Perier had a slight majority; but having later on and rightly considered that the position of a member of the Cabinet was hardly compatible with that of President of the elective Chamber, he resigned it; and M. Laffitte, although he also was a member of the Cabinet, thought fit to take his place. It is, therefore, not at all astonishing that when the great success which M. Perier had just obtained seemed to point him out to all men's minds as the man who ought to be appointed head of the Cabinet and Prime Minister, the idea of ousting him should have occurred to M. Laffitte, and that he should have tried to feel his way by means of the friends of whom he could dispose, and of the brawling blusterers of whom his friends could dispose.

As soon as I noticed this design, I saw its object, and felt what the consequences of it would be. Our Cabinet, as I have said, was divided : on the one hand, a moderate numerical majority, seven to eight ; on the other, a minority which was popular, and which gained its power from the effervescence of the moment. Under these conditions the game was nearly equal, the party of resistance counterbalanced that of progress, and, precarious as it was, the *status quo* might last for some time longer ; but if the numerical majority was weak enough to take as its ostensible chief, and thus as its standard-bearer, the most prominent member of the minority, it would abdicate all power by that very fact ; and every member who composed that majority, losing thereby his character as a public man, would at the same time lose his authority. Everything would be done without aim or purpose, until such moment when all would be equally carried off by the rising tide of a new revolution.

For my part, I resolved to have nothing to do with it at any price, and to prefer, if driven to extremities, to give up power to the party of progress, intending in that case to carry against it a frank but strenuous opposition. But we did not get as far as that at once. If the balance of power was not exactly maintained, at any rate it dragged along during the first fortnight of October.

The Chamber of Deputies, the ranks of which were thinned by frequent resignations and by the quiet desertion of its members, seeing its authority, if not its very existence, menaced, either from without or from within, began loudly to clamour for a new election, which might restore it some fresh courage and infuse a little new blood into its veins. Meanwhile, it asked for some slight respite, as all the members had left their homes suddenly, and now wished to give a look at family and household affairs.

In order to satisfy this general desire, both the Government and the Chamber did their very best. Everyone applied himself to do double work, and to hurry, at racing-speed, Bills and resolutions, which, under any other circumstances, would have been subjected to interminable discussions.

I will do no more than mention those Bills :

1. A Bill which leaves to the jury the cognizance of offences against the Press Laws, and of political offences (this Bill was introduced in the House of Peers).
2. A Bill respecting the importation of grain.
3. A Bill respecting loans for commercial and industrial purposes (30,000,000 of francs).
4. A Provisional Bill with regard to indirect taxation.

A statement of our foreign relations, by M. Molé.

A statement about the state of the army, by Marshal Gérard.

A report by M. Béranger on the abolition of capital punishment.

That report gave rise to a short and useful debate. Although it was favourably received, on the proposal of M. Dupont (of the Eure), which was almost unanimously adopted, it ended in an address to the King, which promised everything without compromising anything.

On October 10th, after having received the King's answer, the Chamber adjourned indefinitely; but the Chambers were to meet again no later than the 10th of November.

That interval was devoted to the elections in fifty-five departments; that is to say, throughout two-thirds of France. There were a hundred and thirty-five seats vacant, which vacancies arose from consecutive resignations. Everywhere the elections were quiet and orderly, and favourable, not only to the Government in general, but to the majority of the Ministry.

This would have been a large addition of strength to us, but events would not allow us to profit by it, for these brought to the light of day not only the internal divisions which were working in the Cabinet, but those

which were threatening to break forth in every department of the Ministry.

I was one of the first to notice this.

As already mentioned, M. Benjamin Constant was the President of the first, that is, the most important, section of the Conseil d'Etat; and, as also mentioned, he had never done us the honour of being present at the sittings: his leisure was filled by some other occupation. One morning, two or three days before the close of the session, the King handed to me two papers which he had just received; one of them was a scheme for the reform of the Conseil d'Etat, according to which that institution was to be transformed into a tribunal, the sittings of which were to be public, and the members of which were to be appointed for life; the other paper was a private letter whereby the author of that scheme informed the King of his intention to embody the scheme into a Bill to be brought before the Chamber of Deputies. Benjamin Constant—for the letter came from him—further informed the King that he would consider the silence of his Majesty as implying royal assent to the proposed Bill. As may well be supposed, the King felt quite hurt at this way of proceeding. As for me, I took the two papers, which I still preserve.

On entering the Chamber of Deputies, I coolly placed them under the eyes of their author, without asking him for an explanation, and leaving him as sole judge of his conduct ; then, and without heeding the apology which he was trying to mutter, I turned my back on him and went away.

I expected to receive his resignation in the course of the day. In this, however, I was deceived. I had, nevertheless, made up my mind. But, as will be easily understood by reading what follows, I had not the time to appoint somebody else in his place. The following account is borrowed from the *Annuaire Historique*. It is quite correct from beginning to end :

‘On October 17, on which day all the National Guard of Versailles had shown great enthusiasm and devotion to the King, the latter found his Palace besieged by a furious mob, which loudly demanded the heads of the Ministers who were about to be put on their trial. These demonstrations assumed a more menacing character on October 18, when some forty or fifty individuals went, in the middle of the day, to the Palais Royal, with a flag which bore the following inscription : “The people wish for the death of the Ministers.” The National Guard who were on duty seized their arms, and arrested the flag-bearer and a



few of those who accompanied him; but during the evening, larger groups assembled in the courts of the Palais Royal, uttering shouts of "Down with the Ministers!" "The head of Polignac!" and it is said that even some cries of "Vive la République" were uttered, and insulting expressions were used towards the King, under his very windows. The National Guard on duty took up arms and cleared the courts and the garden, closing the iron gates. Some amongst the ringleaders were arrested; the others, however, were not to be discouraged. They went by way of the most populous streets and through the Faubourg St. Antoine, where the workmen joined them in considerable numbers, to the Castle of Vincennes, where the Ministers were imprisoned, pending their trial, in the custody of General Daumesnil.

'It was about ten o'clock at night, when eight or nine hundred persons appeared outside the first gate, who were armed, some with guns and swords, but the majority of them with iron-shod sticks; they were headed by a man on horseback, and by the same flag that was borne before them at the Palais Royal. The General caused the gate to be opened, and alone confronted the crowd; he asked the young men who seemed to be its leaders what they wanted. "We want the execution of the

Ministers," was their answer. But that brave man, who had defended Vincennes against a hundred thousand foreigners, was not one to yield to a factious mob. He told them that he would rather blow up the keep than surrender the Ministers who had been entrusted to his guard, and for whose safe custody he was responsible to the State. This answer, which was supported by several vigorous demonstrations, made a strong impression on the mob, who, crying "Long live the General with the wooden leg!" withdrew with a drummer, whom the General had given them to lead them to the *Barrière du Trône*, and whom they afterwards forced to stay with them.

‘Having returned to Paris, not without indulging in riotous conduct on their night march, heated by fatigue and the wine which they had taken at the public-houses on the road, they again appeared at the gates of the *Palais Royal*, at about half-past two in the morning, with the intention either of demanding the release of their comrades who had been arrested during the evening, or of forcibly rescuing them. This created great alarm, as the detachments which had been despatched there in the evening had been withdrawn; but some companies of the 6th regiment of the National Guard had followed the movements of the

rioters, and Colonel Marmier, of the 1st regiment, having been informed of their arrival, had turned out a strong detachment, with which he quickly went to protect the Palais Royal, which was only defended by half a battalion of the 5th, so that the rioters, being hemmed in on two sides, in the Rue Saint-Honoré and the neighbouring streets, were soon obliged to surrender at discretion. The authorities were satisfied with arresting about a hundred of the most violent, and amongst them the man on horseback who seemed to be their leader, and they were all immediately conducted to the Prefecture of Police; some of them were brought before the Assize Courts, and were only sentenced to a few months' imprisonment.'

The next day, at nine o'clock in the morning, the King came down from his apartments into the court of the Palais Royal, accompanied by the Prince Royal, General la Fayette and Marshal Gérard, Minister of War, at the time when the National Guard was being relieved, and calling those brave citizens round him, he thanked them for the zeal, the promptitude, and the plucky spirit with which they checked the ridiculous attempt which had been made by foolish agitators.

““My wish,” he said, “is that public order should cease to be interfered with by the enemies of real

liberty, and of those institutions which France has conquered, and which alone can preserve us from anarchy, and from all the evils which it entails." "

But whilst the King was thus congratulating himself on having escaped from the madmen who wished to force him to proceed to extreme measures against the late Ministry, his Keeper of the Seals, without informing his colleagues, caused an article to be inserted in the *Moniteur* which almost sounded like a promise that justice should take its course, and put off the wish expressed by the Chamber of Deputies to the Greek Calends; and the Prefect of the Seine, being encouraged by this good example, and wishing to place his popularity at the service of public order, issued, in his turn, a proclamation which was drawn up as follows :

‘ Your magistrates are deeply grieved at the disorders which have just been disturbing the public tranquillity. The inhabitants of Paris do not ask for vengeance, for they still are the people to whom belong the glory of those ~~three~~ grand days of July, during which they set a noble and most generous example to the whole world, but they demand justice. The Address of the Chamber of Deputies seemed most inopportunately to go out of its way to make the nation believe that some

concerted action was being taken to interfere with the course of justice as regards the *ex-Ministers*; delays which are necessary in order to give justice its solemn character seem to have accredited and strengthened this opinion. This is the only reason for this popular commotion, for which faithful and good citizens see no other reason but a misunderstanding. I therefore can assure you, my fellow-citizens, that the course of justice has neither been interrupted nor suspended, and that it will not be so.'

Such manifestoes, issued in the name of the Government, were neither more nor less than a slight on a great majority of the Chamber of Deputies, and a denial of all engagements which had been entered into with it, to induce it to substitute a simple address to the King for M. de Tracy's proposal. It was even a great deal more, for it seemed to force upon the Chamber a compact favourable to the late riot and contrary to previous engagements.

It will easily be guessed what dissensions arose out of this in the Council.

M. Dupont (of the Eure), although he admitted that it might have been better if he had consulted his colleagues before making them responsible for an official article, nevertheless defended the article itself in sub-



stance, and would not allow that there was any cause for disallowing the action of, or for dismissing, the Prefect of the Seine. M. Guizot, however, insisted that it must be done, and a Ministerial crisis became imminent.

Then M. Laffitte, during the interviews and the negotiations which men and affairs must naturally lead to when they have reached such a climax, suggested, as tending to an amicable solution of the difficulty, the idea of substituting for a thoroughly new Ministry a remodelled Ministry on a new plan, subject to certain alterations in detail, and to place over it one principal Minister, to be called the President, which would impart to it unity and cohesion, and maintain subordination amongst the members of the Government, as well as in every Ministerial department.

It is very possible that this proposal—which the King looked upon favourably because it relieved him of all the embarrassment which a change of Ministry involves, and which was vehemently supported by its author, and for that very reason met with only a very cold reception from the rest of the Council—would have been allowed to pass, as they were tired of the strife, if I had not cut it short *in l'ine litis*.

## *PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS*

‘There is no question here,’ I said quite plainly, ‘about knowing who will be Minister, or of knowing how the Ministry will be constituted, but of knowing how the Ministry will act ; if, for the future, we intend to resist, firmly and with moderation, by leading it, the agitation which is trying to carry us away with it, or if we shall simply follow and coax it by concessions and compliments, by promises and caresses. Very likely the latter is the better line, very likely the only possible one, to take ; and if so, the best thing to do will be to place a man who openly professes such views at the head of the Government ; but then such a head of the Government must be a man who will be backed up by his colleagues, who must neither cross him in his acts nor in his designs. If M. Laffitte is to be the head of such a Government, I am quite willing to agree to it ; but then it must be his duty to choose his colleagues himself, and I foresee that, as I do not share his opinions, I can neither promise him nor give him my assistance.’

This line of argument, which certainly was a home-thrust, had its effect. I do not mean to say that it forced M. Laffitte to show his whole hand, but yet it obliged him to show what his game was going to be, to let his pretensions be seen and to explain his views.

This was all that was required to make any patching up impossible. M. Guizot and I resigned office, and the King accepted our resignations. M. Laffitte, as President, spent several days in trying to make up a Ministry with those of his former colleagues who still held to him ; he only succeeded partially in doing so. The King made use of his influence over Marshal Gérard and General Sebastiani ; but M. Louis and M. Molé resisted all his solicitations. I was present, though I took scarcely any part in them, at the deliberations which preceded the formation of the new Ministry. There was one good element in it, namely, that it contained no more Ministers without a portfolio. M. Laffitte, President of the Council, replaced M. Louis as Minister of Finance ; Marshal Maison took the post of M. Molé, and M. de Montalivet that of M. Guizot. M. de Montalivet was a very young man, as he had scarcely attained his political majority in the House of Peers ; but, though he was taken into the Ministry as a last resource, he turned out a most excellent choice, and on more than one difficult and critical occasion his services were invaluable. M. Mérilhou was my successor : he was a barrister of Liberal tendencies, the factotum of the Chancellerie, a man of doubtful morals, and who had a petty and narrow mind, and



who was as wanting in political enlightenment as he was in political instincts.

These appointments were published in the *Moniteur* of November 2, but the Ministry was not definitely constituted or installed till the 17th.

M. Laffitte was Minister of Finance ;

M. Dupont, Keeper of the Seals ;

General Sebastiani, Minister for Foreign Affairs ;

Marshal Soult took the place of Marshal Gérard at the War Office ;

M. d'Argout became Minister of Marine instead of General Sebastiani ;

M. de Montalivet, Minister of the Interior ;

M. Mérilhou was appointed Minister of Public Instruction and Worship.

When I took leave of the King on the morning of the 22nd, he reproached me rather vehemently as being the primary cause of the disruption of the Ministry, and for having made every attempt to remedy it useless, if not impossible. The King was right, but I was not wrong, and he himself was obliged to allow this. 'You will be obliged,' I said to him, 'sooner or later, though for a longer or shorter period, to submit to the party of progress. The sooner the better, for you still enjoy a certain amount of genuine popu-

larity which is able to resist that false popularity of the moment ; and you possess a sound majority in the Chamber of Deputies, which will keep the dangerous party in check. If you allow that party to come gradually and quietly into power, under the semblance of official approbation, you will grant them a long period of office ; if you restrain the Opposition, you will not be able to appeal to it except after much trouble and some disasters ; if you compromise your really loyal servants by making them take the wrong road, they will lose all credit with sensible people, and when the proper moment arrives will inspire nobody with either courage or confidence. In the present state of affairs, M. Laffitte and M. Dupont (of the Eure) will not remain in office two months if they intend governing as they wish ; and I feel sure that before those two months are elapsed they will find themselves at their wits' end. The King will then find men at hand who have maintained the honour of their flag, and whom men of good sense will eagerly follow. But if you wish them to put their colours in their pocket, and to join in the cry with the brawlers, what good will those men be to you, and who will come to your assistance at the moment of danger ?”

As a matter of fact, when his first moment of ill-

humour had passed by, the King agreed with me, and we parted as very good friends. On that very day, I left the hôtel of the Rue de Grenelle, as I must confess, with a certain amount of regret.

That regret did not apply to my post in the Ministry ; ambition has never been either my strong or my weak point. Neither did I regret the position which I occupied, for it will have been seen that I did not deceive myself about the unpleasant and precarious conditions under which I occupied it, when with an amount of devotion, which partook somewhat of patriotism, I had undertaken to protect three Government departments, whose existence was more or less compromised, against the revolutionary spirit of the day. These were the Conseil d'Etat, the University, and the Catholic worship.

I had undertaken to re-establish them on a firm footing, so that they should be shielded from all violence and insult, whilst at the same time they should be freed from everything with which the Restoration had embarrassed or disfigured them. I undertook the task with all my heart, and I hoped I should succeed in it ; but I should have required two or three months more to accomplish it. Thus I really sacrificed a good deal when I hastened the downfall of the Ministry to which I belonged ; therefore I shall not dismiss this narrative

without rapidly mentioning the projects which I had made and even begun to carry out.

1. It may be remembered that I found the Conseil d'Etat almost entirely devoid of political importance. The King owed it a grudge for some decisions which related to his own private affairs, and as Louis Philippe—quite unlike Louis XII.\*—remembered the wrongs done to the Duke of Orleans, royalty seemed delighted to see the Conseil d'Etat thus reduced to a state of political insignificance. The Keeper of the Seals, M. Dupont, intended to abolish it altogether; he, nevertheless, consented that the committee dealing with State litigations, and which was provisionally maintained, should finish up the arrears of current business.

It may also be remembered that my first care was to set up the Conseil d'Etat again, to set it on foot officially and solemnly, and then to restore prestige to it by composing it of those who were rightly esteemed for their talents and culture, their knowledge and their experience. What sacrifices I was obliged to make in fulfilling my task to the men and to the ideas of the time were but few, without any real importance, and

\* An allusion to the words said to have been spoken by Louis XII. on being pressed by his courtiers to avenge insults inflicted upon him when Duke of Orleans: 'Le roi de France ne venge pas les injures faites au Duc d'Orléans.'

were soon made good again. That I could prove from the correspondence which I kept up, and of which I still preserve the copy, with those members of the former Conseil d'Etat with whom I had parted with regret.

After having thus reorganized the Conseil d'Etat, and given it as much prestige—derived from the merit of those who composed it—as the difficulty of existing circumstances would allow, instead of permitting it to linger in the subordinate position of a mere collective office, if I may so express myself, I formed it into a body, a real body politic, by giving its members a real head, by associating it, as its indispensable right, with the course of all public business, great or small, by leaving to it the initiative of this continued and varying course of business, by preparing it to become eventually and by the force of circumstances what the Privy Council is in England—a pliant and continual bond connecting the public powers, the eye and the arm of the executive, a rallying-point, and an element of conciliation between the parties which mutually succeed each other. What were my ideas and my hopes on this matter, may be seen from a book which almost brought a criminal prosecution on to me.

2. As regards Public Instruction, or, in order not to extend the field of my personal activity, as regards,

properly speaking, the Universities, my task was more limited and more easily performed. For an ephemeral Ministry like ours, and for one who like myself was more so still, there could be no question of putting hands on to the holy ark—I mean to say, on to the very work of the great Emperor.

If anybody is curious to know what would have been my wishes and my tendencies in such a matter, if I had been called upon to give them their free course and to carry out the reforms I intended, he can inform himself by consulting a writing of mine which I mentioned just now, and the voluminous report on ‘ Higher Education ’ which I submitted to the House of Peers later on. But we were still far from having got as far as that. For the moment, I was obliged to be satisfied with repairing the damage done to the Imperial work by M. de Corbière’s Administration, and by that of the Bishop of Hermopolis ; with restoring to the University body its cohesion and its integrity, either by reinstating its members who had been illegally excluded, or by removing intruders who had been illegally introduced into it ; and lastly, with protecting the establishment itself against the assaults which the revolutionary spirit was preparing to make on it.

All that was certainly enough.

The first point presented no real difficulty. The hardest had been done. Having been entrusted during M. de Martignac's Ministry to the clever and energetic activity of M. de Vatimesnil, the ground was very nearly cleared. The mistakes, small or great, which former Administrations had committed, had found an able reformer. It should be added here that the successor of M. de Vatimesnil, whatever he may have done afterwards, did not at first leave the right path, so that it only remained for me to follow his wise example, or rather, since I could do it, to carry out whatever reforms the Ministry of M. de Martignac, owing to the very little credit it enjoyed in high places, and to the mistrust with which it was regarded by its master, had been unable to undertake.

It was well known that the École Normale, the great seminary for University professors, that *pépinière* of the future, which had been founded by an Imperial decree in 1808, had been abolished by a stroke of the pen in 1821, under the pretext of Philosophism, of Jacobinism, of Atheism, and of other 'isms' which were very fashionable just then. It is also known that it had been replaced by some dozens of branches which were installed in the Royal Colleges ; and when the failure of this new plan had become an undeniable

fact, the École Normale was set up again as a preparatory establishment, rather clumsily built, and which the Government took good care not to call after a name which aroused its suspicion and had an evil reputation. I was the first to order that it should reassume its former name. I did something more and even better than this. I restored it its prerogatives, and its course of study, enriched by everything liberal that the dearly-bought experience of the past and the hopes of the moment could add to it. The Council of the University, at the sittings of which I used to preside as a rule, devoted itself to this work at once.

But then came the unpleasant obligation, from which my two predecessors had been dispensed—I mean, of severely and impartially revising the promotions which had been made, without rhyme or reason, since the former École Normale had been done away with. There had been a unanimous outcry about this matter in the literary world and in the schools, an outcry which was kept down with some difficulty under the Martignac Ministry—which itself did not find it easy to maintain its position—and which there was nothing now to prevent breaking out.

Constrained as I was, both by justice and policy, to give satisfaction to the just claim of public opinion, I



laid it down as a rule of conduct that I would only give it what was strictly due to it, that I would maintain in their present posts all those who had obtained them regularly, whatever might be their want of merit or their unpopularity, and rigorously to exclude all those who, to obtain their situations, had not complied with the conditions required by the rules of the University. In so doing, I did not avoid the reproaches of either one side or the other, and still less those of their families and of their protectors ; but I was firm, and, to my great regret, I extended the principle of exclusion even to the Abbé Nicole, a friend of M. de Richelieu, with whom he had returned to France in 1814, and of whose sister, Madame de Montcalm, he was the habitual guest. That lady, whom I had not the honour of knowing, asked me to call upon her and to listen to what she had to say ; so I ran the risk, and before I left her I made her understand and almost approve my motives. I certainly, of my own accord, promised her a large compensation ; I promised her to get the King to propose the Abbé Nicole for the first bishopric which should fall vacant. And, as it was a very good choice, I had no scruples in the matter ; but long before this promise could be fulfilled I left the Ministry.

In an inverse way, I was just as hardly pressed,

and not less urged on the one hand to dismiss people, as I was, on the other, to maintain them in their posts.

It will hardly be believed that the person who was most attacked in my flock was the famous M. Poisson, then the first geometrician in Europe. As a member of the Royal Council of Public Instruction, he was entrusted with the management of our modest finances, which certainly did not require such a powerful head, and I was daily called upon to strike at him on the pretext—which will also scarcely be believed—of his being a Jesuit. Matters went so far that one morning M. Arago (who then belonged to our party), and who was a no less illustrious savant, called on me to beg me to save M. Poisson and not to yield to the storm.

I could not help laughing out aloud. ‘What do you take me for?’ I asked him; ‘and do you really think that I wish my name to be handed down to posterity as having sacrificed M. Poisson because he was the partisan of Brother Bauny or of Ignatius Loyola? What a feat of valour that would indeed be!’

After I had dispelled his fears, M. Arago also began to laugh; but the panic amongst learned men was so great at the first moment, that almost at the same time I received from M. Cuvier, who was then in England, a letter, in which he requested me

to maintain him in his post in the Council of Public Instruction, entering at the same time into some explanations which were certainly very useless, and which were quite uncalled-for from a man with so distinguished a name. I answered him in a friendly letter, that the only use which I should make of my authority over him would be to recall him at once, as I stood much in need of his services. I, however, made him pay for this on his return by pressing him to let me have a copy of his excellent report on Primary Schools in Holland, which was not to be had at any bookseller's ; he sent it to me, or rather he sent me his own copy of it. I do not know whether he meant to give it me or not, but it is quite certain that I never returned it, and it is still in the library at Broglie ; that is the only important fraud I ever was guilty of.

The presence and assistance of the leading men of science were of great help to me in resisting, no longer the illiberal and retrograde tendency of the Restoration, but, on the contrary, the ultra-liberal tendency of the new *régime*.

In fact, all the members of the self-styled enlightened portion of the self-styled party of progress kept up a constant agitation in favour of suppressing almost entirely classical studies, and of replacing them by

new and extensive scientific and professional studies. M. de Tracy had already announced a proposal on this subject, which was quite consistent with the state of our manners, and with the inclinations of a democratic society.

I must say a few words on my relations with the clergy.

Apparently there lay the most delicate and difficult part of my task. The French clergy, taken as a body, with certain individual exceptions, regarded themselves as having been dethroned in the person of Charles X. The preponderance which it affected even more than it really enjoyed during the reign of that Prince, and the means by which it sought to extend and to impress it, were one of the principal causes of grievance on the part of the nation against the masters whom the second Restoration had given us ; and seeing that it had now lost that preponderance for ever, unless a third Restoration should take place, we were bound to look upon the clergy not as a support, but as an enemy.

It was indeed a redoubtable enemy, being as it was a regularly established body, spread through all the degrees of its hierarchy over the whole face of the country, with its leaders, numbering nearly a hundred, ranking among the highest in every department, and its soldiers, to the number of nearly forty thousand, in each parish, having

there a tribune—the pulpit—from which to speak to the assembled people, and in each household a secret *Moniteur*—the confessional—to speak to the conscience.

The clergy, of course, could not attack us openly by force ; but the general and continued action of its moral authority, of its practical influence on people's minds, supporting, in time of Revolution, the ill-regulated flight of public liberty, could make first the re-establishment and then the maintenance of public order more and more difficult.

Those who know what was the attitude of the princes of our Church at the period to which I refer, what, amongst other things, was the language spoken, even in the pulpit, by M. de Quélen—the Archbishop of Paris ; those who have not altogether forgotten the *Avenir* newspaper, and the burning pages which were written and signed—or inspired—by the Abbé de Lamennais, who, after being a stormy revolutionary, had become a stormy demagogue, will certainly not think that I am exaggerating.

As it was impossible to do or to change anything in the Church—fortunately placed as it was by its own nature and by the Concordat out of reach of all attacks—the difficulty of amicable, or merely indeed of any intercourse with our clergy, such as the events of the last

fifteen years had made them, was a matter of conduct, of prudence, and of time for our new Government.

This is how I understood that task :

(1) Carefully to avoid doing any wrong to the clergy, so as not to give them any real or even apparent cause for complaint.

(2) Not to demand anything of them but what was strictly legal ; nothing that should not be clearly agreeable to their written obligations, and which they themselves had recognised.

(3) As far as possible to take their words and deeds in good part, without trying for any premature *rapprochement*.

(4) Not to tolerate anything from them which might be derogatory to their duties and to propriety, without protesting in respectful language.

(5) To know how to wait, and to allow length of time and success to work.

I came to an understanding with the new Prefects, which, indeed, was not the easiest part of my undertaking, as they were all either newly appointed or over-zealous officials. I told them to maintain a serious attitude of reserve and expectation towards the Bishops and clergy ; to demand nothing of them except that the *Domine salvum* should be sung in all churches ; to exact

nothing beyond strict obedience to the law ; regularly to let me have a copy of the episcopal instructions, and to take no steps in anything that regarded religion, without previously referring to me at once and waiting for my answer.

I sent, to the Archbishops and Bishops, a circular couched in peremptory terms, reminding them that it was their duty to submit all nominations to livings, to Vicar-generalships and to Canonries, to the King, a duty which had too often been neglected under the Restoration.

I caused the list of the wilful breaches in the carrying out of the famous ordinances which were passed by Charles X. on the proposal of the Martignac Ministry (M. Portalis and the Bishop of Beauvais), with the express approbation of the Holy See, to be faithfully and exactly recorded. This list was published ; I reported it to the King, and proposed to him :

(1) For the future, to enforce firmly those obligations.

(2) To abolish the scholarships which had been granted to the small seminaries, with the object and under the explicit condition of conforming themselves *bonâ fide* and strictly to their obligations, and which had only served to extend and to propagate those disorders which it was the object of the ordinances to put down.

I announced this suppression to the Bishops and

Archbishops ; but, in order to spare their susceptibilities, I only alleged, as the cause of it, the embarrassed state of the finances, and the necessity for retrenchment. But, so that there might be no mistake, I urged the King to receive the request of the Jews favourably, which was that they might for the future be paid by the State, like all other forms of worship which were officially recognised, than which nothing was more just and reasonable.

Lastly, to show clearly that whilst I scrupulously respected the rights of the clergy, I would allow no attacks to be made on the rights of the State, I applied the provisions of the law to three almoners whom my predecessor had appointed to three colleges of Paris.

These young ecclesiastics kept up a regular correspondence with the Archbishop of Paris, and violently denounced their colleges and their professors to him as so many hot-beds of impiety and corruption. As their correspondence had been communicated to the ultra-Catholic newspapers, and had been published and caused much excitement amongst all parties, I sent for them, and said to them gravely :

‘ I believe you inform the Archbishop of Paris of the state of teaching in your respective colleges. I have cause to complain that I have only been informed of this



by the newspapers. I could only admit such a right on three common conditions, with which the rules of propriety have acquainted you :

‘(1) That the complaints which you have brought against the professors of the University were communicated to them, so that they might be enabled to answer them ;

‘(2) That such complaints were drawn up in dignified and respectful terms ;

‘(3) That they were not published without the authorization of the establishment to which you belong.

‘I leave you to judge how these conditions have been fulfilled—I leave you to judge for yourselves ; take up the papers and read them. Can I thus let civil war be introduced into establishments whose direction has been entrusted to my care, and allow the members which compose it mutually to calumniate each other, almost under the very eyes of their pupils ?’

Although they endeavoured, as well as they could, to excuse themselves from having had anything to do with the publication of their reports, my three interviewers tried to take the high hand with me, and to maintain what they called their independence ; but I remained firm, and cutting the interview short, I dismissed them, telling them that they had forfeited their official position, and I

caused this decision to be communicated to M. de Quélen, and explained my motives to him, though without expecting or asking for an answer.

Those three young ecclesiastics joined the ranks of those journalists whom the Abbé de Lamennais was recruiting and drilling under the banner of the *Avenir*. They have done better since then ; one of them has even acquired a just celebrity both in the Church and in literature—he became Father Lacordaire.

I met another difficulty in my way, which was a graver and more thorny one, because it could not be overcome by sheer force.

During the few months that preceded the fall of Charles X., three episcopal sees fell vacant. I cannot remember their names, nor do I find them amongst my notes. However that may be, they were provided for ; the elections to the vacant thrones had been sanctioned by the Government, and the successors to the sees had been accepted in the Consistory. All that remained to be done was to install them ; we had made no opposition to this, when we were informed that the new Bishops refused to take the oaths, and yet claimed to be enthroned in spite of their refusal.

Naturally, this affair caused a great noise, and created a great scandal amongst the public and in the press.

When I informed the Council of this strange incident, the King grew very much irritated, and the Council highly indignant. All the Ministers, even the most moderate, vehemently declared that a very severe example must be made of the Bishops.

That was very easy to say ; but what was to be done ?

We did not seem to have any apparent powers of deposing Bishops who had been regularly nominated, and regularly and canonically instituted.

In order to put off their enthronement indefinitely, and, in a measure, to reduce them by famine, it would first of all have been necessary to come to an understanding with the different Chapters and with the capitulary vicars, who would certainly not have lent themselves to the matter, even if they had had the right to do so.

The point had been debated before my arrival, and one of the members of the Council—I think it was M. Dupin—had proposed that the episcopal revenues should be seized until the oath had been taken ; and this view seemed to be the prevalent one.

I peremptorily rejected it. It would have been a pure act of violence, and acting without any semblance of right. It would have been an unexampled act, unjustified by any precedents which could be produced with the slightest shade of analogy. Fore-

seeing the storm there would be, I wrote about this a small essay, quite irrefutable; and when the discussion got warm, I added, as I found myself almost alone of my opinion, that to act thus would be to begin a war with the Church with a light heart—a war the end of which none of us might perhaps see, and which I, for my part, should certainly not begin.

The King, according to his custom, cut the matter short, adjourned the Council, lectured all of us separately, and then, coming to me, he took me aside.

‘As a matter of fact,’ he said, ‘what do you want? What do you expect to arrive at?’

‘I do not know yet awhile,’ I replied; ‘but I know very well what I do not want. I will not, with my eyes open, commit an enormous and gratuitous fault. We have to deal with three recalcitrants whom the body of the clergy has not supported as yet, and whom, apparently, it will not support, if we do not put ourselves in the wrong as regards them. They are clearly in the wrong. The obligation of taking the oath is laid upon them, not by the King, but by the Concordat; the form of the oath is drawn up in proper terms; and besides, it is that which preceded the Concordat itself. This is the Article:

‘“ARTICLE 6.—All Bishops, before entering upon

their episcopal functions, shall take the same oath of fidelity to the First Consul as was customary before the change of Government, and which is as follows :

“ I swear and promise to God, on the Holy Gospels, to remain faithful to the Government which has been established by the Constitution. I also promise to have no communication with any body, or to be present at any meeting, or to have anything to do with any combination, whether it be within or without the realm, which may be adverse to the public tranquillity ; and if I learn that, within my diocese or elsewhere, any plot is being formed against the State, I will inform the Government of it.”

‘ In the face of such an Article,’ I added, ‘ I can only look on the demands of the three Bishops as a crotchet without any ulterior results, which will fall of its own accord before the disapprobation of the general episcopal body, if it is put in a position to pronounce on the matter officially ; and still more so if placed before the Holy See, provided we were to seek for its intervention, as was done during the time of the Martignac Ministry with regard to the famous ordinances. In this case, we should be much stronger, as we should have the text of the Concordat for us, and only a very small fraction of the Episcopacy against us. I am fully convinced that

**this** time the mere menace of proceeding to such **extreme** measures will suffice. Allow me to see and **to** talk to my contumacious Bishops, but meanwhile do **not** compromise my work or excite the public mind.'

I saw the three Bishops, and pointed out the Article of the Concordat to them, and begged them to explain the reason of their refusal for taking the oath, which they gave me very sincerely. It was against their conscience, they said, to enter into any engagements towards a new Government, and above all one in which they had no confidence, so as to inform it of anything they might learn which might be prejudicial to the State.

I seized their idea. I had no difficulty in allowing that the clause in question was to be regretted, and might give rise to suspicion, but I also drew their attention to the fact that the modification of the text of the Concordat did not depend upon us; I added that nevertheless everything depended upon the sense which the Government might choose to attach to it, and that I would take it upon myself to undertake that the Government, whilst enforcing on them an oath which dated from times almost immemorial, would demand nothing more from them than what it had the right to exact from every Frenchman holding any public

office, namely, 'Fidelity to the King; obedience to the constitutional charter and to the laws of the kingdom.' I also told them that it was very far from our thoughts to make the Bishops informers, and to turn the confessional into an office for spies.

My explanation proved sufficient, and no more resistance was offered. There was no Gordian knot to be severed, and I did not require the sword of Alexander to gain my object.

When I left my official residence on November 3, after having been a member of the Ministry for fifty-one days, I handed to the King the copy of my work which I had formally drawn up on the political state of the different dioceses, and I was able to assure him that everywhere the relations between the civil and the ecclesiastical authorities either remained good or had been restored to order; that out of 28,338 priests only 300 had given cause for any complaint; that out of 83 dioceses only 22 were behindhand as regarded the *Domine salvum*; and that of these, 13 promised that they would submit shortly, and 9 were only waiting for a sign from Rome, which would take care not to require much solicitation to give it.

Consequently, as regarded this matter, and all others, I left everything in a good state, and on a sound footing.

## IV.

## CLOSE OF THE YEAR 1830.

THE Chamber of Deputies was not the only place where the difficulties of the hour made themselves felt. The House of Peers, shattered as it was, and for that very reason, had its own difficulties to contend with. The moment was coming on at which the fate of the monarchy, and of society itself, might depend upon its firmness and its prudence. The trial of the late Ministers was about to begin.

The House of Peers having constituted itself into a Court of Justice on October 4, the preliminary instruction which it had confided to M. Pasquier, its President, assisted by M. de Bastard, M. Séguier, and M. Pontécoulant, was drawing to a close. In the meanwhile, those members who had resigned their seats in the House, and those who, being too timid to do so, had remained, did their best to fetter its action and to humiliate it.

Amongst the former, M. de Kergorlay, in the very



letter in which he refused to take the oath, openly raised the standard of rebellion, insulted the son of the regicide in the person of the King, and termed the decision of the Ministers judicial assassination. He was summoned to appear before the House, and as his defence was even more insolent than his letter, he was sentenced to pay a fine of 10,000 francs (£400), and to be imprisoned for two years.

The editors of the two papers who had appropriated the letter and inserted it in full were sentenced to a fine of 2,000 francs (£80) each, and one year's imprisonment, which they fully underwent, auxiliaries and principal.

Amongst the obstructive Peers, the Duke of Fitz-James, while protesting that he would never invoke foreign aid to support the Bourbons of the elder branch, opened fire on the younger branch, accused the Ministers of exercising an unendurable tyranny, and gave the signal for that species of opposition which would make all government impossible by refusing to give it any confidence and any authority.

I took a large share in these debates—in fact, so much so that, for a long time, I gave my opponents a distaste for returning to the charge.

I also took my share in the acts by which our

House asserted its rights by admitting several fresh hereditary Peers, and amongst them the Duc de Crussol, who succeeded his father (the Duc d'Uzès), who was not dead, but had simply resigned the peerage.

The trial of the ex-Ministers began on November 29, but the debates were not public. The House, proceeding in accordance with precedents, assumed the part of a *Chambre du Conseil*, of a tribunal sitting *en première instance*, and of a *Chambre d'Accusation*, sitting *en cour royale*; but it followed, step by step, in default of a special law with regard to which we had not up to that time been able to come to any agreement, the rules of the common law, and the generally received principles of criminal jurisprudence.

M. de Bastard presented the report in the name of the preliminary commission; the language of that document was serious and moderate, and the statement of the facts exact and impartial; the analysis of the interrogatories and of the depositions was faithful and complete, but beyond that it told nobody anything new.

The House acknowledged its competence, both as regarded the nature of the facts and over the persons of the incriminated Ministers; it decreed that the seven inculpated members of the late Ministry should be put

on their trial, and decided that it should proceed to debate the case against those of the defendants who were present, without prejudice to those who were contumacious.

The opening of the debate was fixed for the 15th of December.

Such an event as the trial of those Ministers was a serious ordeal for a novice Government like ours. I may even say that it put the Revolution, of which it had been the outcome, on its own trial ; and further, that it was a sort of crucial test on which all revolutions are founded.

It is held as a matter of fact, on the authority of moralists and of publicists, and even with the approbation of the greatest saints in the calendar, that circumstances may be encountered under which any oppressed nation recovers the right of disposing of itself, under which legitimate defence is the duty of society collectively, as of every individual personally, but only on these three conditions :

That the oppression has been real and flagrant ;

That no other regular means of resistance remain ;

That whilst exposing itself, by employing force, to falling into a state of anarchy, there is a reasonable chance of escaping it.

There are certainly a small number of thinkers who contest this right, even under such conditions ; the greater number, on the other hand, admit this right, but in general, as a matter of speculation, whilst doubting more or less the possibility of practically fulfilling the conditions.

Our revolution of July showed that they were wrong, as far as regarded the first two conditions. The aggression had been open, persistent, and gratuitous. With us, it was a matter of life and death ; all lawful means had in the first place been exhausted on our side, and quite disregarded by the oppressor.

Yet the last condition still remained to be fulfilled.

But that also bade fair to come to an issue favourable to us ; everything had turned out satisfactorily. An upright and sensible Government had, almost the very next day, reaped the fruits of the victory. There had been no personal violence, no bloodshed except in fair warfare and on the battlefield. It remained to be seen whether the victory itself would be used as generously as it had been moderate ; whether this upright and sensible Government would be able to perform its task ; whether it would not allow itself to be swayed by feelings of resentment and reprisals ; or to be carried away by that swarm of noisy

and turbulent men, whom every revolution causes, as it were, to rise out of the ground, and lets loose in its track.

As regarded the Government itself, there was no need for any apprehension.

Although those who were the chief culprits ought to be severely punished for the sake of example, yet seeing that neither strict justice nor the interests of society called for their heads, the King was fully determined to risk everything in order to protect them, and the same was the case with his former and present Ministers. I owe it to M. Laffitte and to M. Dupont (of the Eure) to state that they were amongst the first to proclaim their views in that respect in a spirited and straightforward manner. That was also almost unanimously the case in the House of Peers, and by a very large majority in the Chamber of Deputies ; the latter Chamber, in laying before the King a proposal to abolish capital punishment, had even shown its feeling by an irregular and excessive step.

Thus all was going on well as far as the public powers were concerned, but, without, public opinion was getting excited ; the unanimous outcry met with a universal echo ; all the blood that had been so wantonly shed was crying aloud for vengeance ; there was no justification, no interest, and no pleasant recollection

attaching to the names of the threatened culprits; if ever the cry of *Væ victis!* could appear excusable, it was at such a moment, after such events, and with regard to such men. Nothing was in their favour but the uncertainty of the law and the pity of kind-hearted men, which were only weak arguments against the tumult of popular passion.

These feelings were working, above all and more than anywhere else, in the ranks of the National Guard, and amongst them, as the decisive moment approached, passion often raged furiously. Noisy and turbulent agitators urged the National Guard on to extremities by their deafening cries for blood. And it must not be forgotten that, at that time, the National Guard comprised the whole of Paris. Having at first been disbanded by M. de Villèle, then reconstituted spontaneously to the roar of the guns, it saw its ranks increased by the working population from the faubourgs, and by a swarm of volunteers and adventurers, who were allured by the smell of powder. The National Guard had, moreover, borne all the burden of the three days of struggle, and of the fierceness of the file-firing; it had defeated the army of Charles X., and preserved order in the city. It was the only armed force of which the Government could really dispose, and the troops which were dis-

persed in their barracks, feeling humiliated by their defeat and wavering in their allegiance, were not to be relied upon. What would happen if, on the day of the trial, the National Guard were to take different sides at the very gates of the place where that trial was going on? Was it absolutely certain that the reliable and sensible majority would consent to fire on their own brethren, in order to rescue from the fate which they perhaps deserved men who were their enemies but the day before?

The excitement rose to such a pitch in the last two or three days, that it rapidly extended from the lower to the higher classes, that a compromise was more or less openly spoken about, and that there was a question of making a scapegoat of M. de Polignac, and of making his head pay for all the rest. Indeed, I myself heard that proposal made by men whose names I will not mention, even indirectly. The foreign Legations, certainly, so it is said, expressed themselves very freely, and seemed to think that it was rather foolish to risk the maintenance of order in France—and perhaps the peace of Europe itself—in order to save an individual towards whom nobody had any obligations, and whom every Court and every Sovereign had warned of the fate which threatened him. I relate this from public report, for I myself heard nothing to that effect.

The King would not even allow the matter to be mentioned to him. As he could only count on the National Guard with any certainty, he kept the whole of it in readiness, and appointed M. de la Fayette Commander-in-Chief. Very likely he had no choice in the matter, seeing the position he was then in. If so it was fortunate, for there was not in the whole of France or elsewhere another man who was braver, more generous, and more ready to commit himself to any cause where patriotism and humanity were at stake. He was even entrusted with the command of the small body of cavalry and infantry which was to be kept in reserve where occasion might require their presence.

The 10th of December was fixed as the day on which the accused Ministers were to be removed from Vincennes to Paris, and M. de la Fayette issued an order of the day on the 8th providing for all the arrangements which this first step required. He forbade the whole National Guard, both officers and soldiers, to appear out of uniform on any pretext, or to go about their business without indicating the place where they could be found in case they should be wanted.

This prohibition extended also to the National Guard of the suburbs of Paris.



As the House of Peers held their sitting in the Luxembourg, and the state of public feeling would not allow the carriages which had been prepared for the accused Ministers to drive through the streets morning and evening, the Petit Luxembourg, which was contiguous to the Grand Luxembourg, had been turned into a State prison, fortified, as experts said, surrounded by boardings and palisades with corresponding iron gratings, and the whole communicated with Vincennes by the garden, the Boulevards, and the outer streets.

As early as the 9th the avenues of the Forest of Vincennes were occupied by the troops. At 6 o'clock in the morning of the 10th, the officers of the House of Peers having communicated to General Daumesnil the necessary order signed by the President, the prisoners were handed over to them. M. de Polignac, M. Peyronnet, and M. Guernon de Ranville were placed in the same carriage; M. de Chantelauze, who was not at all well on that day, was taken to Paris in the evening by General Daumesnil himself.

'The escort was composed of two pickets of the mounted National Guard, under the command of General Carbonnel, Chief of the Staff, a squadron of Chasseurs, under the command of General Fabvier, and a detachment of artillery. M. de Montalivet, on horseback, pre-

ceded the whole procession. It wound its way through the Rue du Faubourg Saint-Antoine, and the Bridge of Austerlitz, to the Boulevards on the south side of the river, and reached the Luxembourg by the avenue of the Observatory at about 8 o'clock in the morning. Early as it was, a certain number of sightseers were on the route of the prisoners, but no disturbance occurred.

'The few days which preceded the debates (from December 10th to 15th) passed without any incident. There was a tacit truce. The town and even the faubourgs had re-assumed a sombre silence such as sometimes precedes and presages a storm.

'On the 15th, the Court was opened to the public. No precaution which the strictest prudence might suggest had been neglected. The National Guard, the troops of the line and the Municipal Guard were on foot, and distributed over the different quarters of the town; a considerable force was concentrated in the courts, in the dependencies, and in the neighbourhood of the old palace of the Medicis; but no hindrance was put in the way of traffic, and the streets were free.

'At ten o'clock, the defendants were brought into Court, preceded by four Municipal Guardsmen. They wore black evening-coats without any insignia or decorations; their bearing was composed, their faces were

calm, and M. de Chantelauze alone showed traces of his recent sufferings by the paleness of his countenance. Near them, on seats for the defence, were M. de Martignac, who had come to assist M. de Polignac by defending him; M. Sauzet, still a very young man, who had been summoned from the Lyons Bar through the confidence that M. de Chantelauze reposed in him; and M. Crémieux, who defended M. Guernon de Ranville.

‘A few moments later, an usher announced the approach of the Court. When all the Peers had taken their seats, the President declared the case opened. When the names were called over, it was found that a hundred and sixty-three Peers were present, nineteen gave an excuse for their absence, and a few absented themselves voluntarily.’

I have borrowed this description of the whole scene from the historiographer of King Louis-Philippe, as I could neither do any better nor say anything better myself.

Now the trial officially began; when I say officially, I mean that we had employed the preceding days in preparatory meetings at the small house of our President to come to an understanding about the delicate questions which we should have to settle before the general public and under the fire of the defence. The

two principal questions to be discussed were those relating to the crime and to the punishment, and about which everything yet remained to be settled.

When the Charter, foreseeing the possibility of such a case, appointed the Deputies as accusers and the Peers as judges of incriminated Ministers, it defined Ministerial crimes and misdemeanours both as treason and frauds, but left the definition itself of these misdemeanours to legal procedure. That definition was to be provided for by a simple law, but, in 1830, that law had not as yet come into existence; it was still expected, although various attempts had been made to fill up this want, but without success. After that, what was to be done, under existing circumstances? How could we make up for the lack of any special law on the subject?

For this everybody proposed his own particular system, and all these different systems more or less agreed with the indictment brought before our bar, in the name of the Chamber of Deputies, and which had been drawn up by selecting certain articles of the ordinary Penal Code in order to define, in an artificial manner, such and such Ministerial crimes for which the Penal Code had made no provision. I opposed this system, for it appeared to me both timid and

dangerous ; timid, because it seemed as if we doubted ourselves, our rights, our position in the State ; dangerous, because it was stretching the letter and the spirit of the Penal Code, and openly making game of both. It would set an unfortunate example which the Inferior Courts could not fail to follow ; besides, according to my ideas, it should be a general rule, in criminal cases, to act quite openly, to say frankly what is being done, and to do what one says, and then to assume the responsibility of one's acts.

I added that by law, and on constitutional principle, the Legislature is the supreme judge—of course, within the limits of justice and reason—and that its decisions ought to be final. The guarantee against any possible abuse of such supreme power is in the harmony of the three institutions which compose the Legislature : the two Chambers and the Executive, in their mutual control and in the diversity of their nature and origin. No higher authority can be appealed to.

It is, therefore, the duty of the Legislature to provide, in all cases, for all social requirements. And now such a case had occurred. A heinous crime which imperilled the security of the State—a crime foreseen and defined by the Charter—had been committed in the broad daylight. A precise text, a technical defini-

tion, was all that was required to permit of proper punishment being inflicted on the guilty party. To proceed *à priori*, to define the offence and to punish it simultaneously, or rather successively, was doubtless an act of sovereignty; but to stop short before the obstacle, and, through impunity, to leave the persons of the accused Ministers at the mercy of an outburst of public vengeance which, as time went, was already kept down with difficulty, would certainly have been like abdicating supreme power—such a course would have been a regular surrender—it would, moreover, have been like sacrificing substance to form, and real justice to apparent justice, seeing indeed that the sentence about to be pronounced could be modified by the discretionary right of pardon enjoyed by the King, and would, therefore, *as regards its legal enforcement*, be the collective work of the three ruling powers in the State, and be placed under the guarantee of their mutual consent.

I had no hesitation in maintaining this theory, which gained the day after a tolerably lively debate. I do not mean to lay any stress on the progress and the incidents of the trial, as all was public, and the *Moniteur* is to be found everywhere. The accused Ministers put a very good face upon the matter. All explained themselves,

though they neither personally excused themselves nor reciprocally accused each other ; M. de Polignac did so with perhaps rather too much studied eloquence, but with simple and touching sincerity. M. Peyronnet was extremely eloquent ; he had never deserved this praise during the whole of his unenviable prosperity, nor did anyone think he could be eloquent ; his strength of mind, the height of his disdain, the loftiness of his ideas and of his language, struck me with admiration—the word is not too strong—prejudiced though I was against him. It was well known that he had never agreed with the ordinances, that he had withstood them almost to the end, and had only signed them from a sense of honour. He did not make the slightest mention of this, and did not even allude to it ; but the truth was made all the more plain by his very endeavours to hide it, and gave him, whether he wished it or not, the air of a martyr ; in spite of all, this word was on everybody's lips.

It was just the same with M. Guernon de Ranville.

Like M. Peyronnet, he had resisted from the beginning to the very last, and then given way from similar motives ; but in the presence of his judges he did not assume such a lofty tone. It seems that M. Crémieux, who defended him, had obtained his sanction

that he should mention his resistance to signing the ordinances, and intended to make it a matter of credit to him to have so acted, and thus to place him in a position quite distinct from that of his co-defendants; but M. Guernon de Ranville having withdrawn that authorization at the beginning of the opening speech of his counsel, the unfortunate barrister lost his head altogether, and, owing to his confusion and to the heat of the Court, arising from the crowd that was there, he fainted and had to be carried out unconscious.

Counsel for the defence played a prominent part at that trial, and here it was that M. Sauzet, the young eagle of the Lyons Bar, began his reputation by defending M. de Chantelauze with an amount of boldness which his talent atoned for, but which in fact exceeded all bounds of moderation. He told us openly to our faces that the authors of the ordinances and those of the Revolution of July were playing the same game; that every Constitution, seeing that it was the imperfect work of the human mind, contained implicitly an Article 14, or rather had a remedy for extreme cases within itself; that such a remedy meant either a *coup d'état* or a revolution, according to the hand which applied it; and that history was the only judge of its legality.



With the exception of the latter, his arguments were sound enough. It may be remembered that in 1815, when I myself was young and rash, I had brought forward the same argument in defending Marshal Ney, but even then I took care not to push it to extremes, or to presume to disarm social justice altogether by so doing.

M. de Martignac deservedly attracted most notice. He who, as the universally regretted victim of the foolish ambition of his successor and of the mad obstinacy of his master, had remained standing amidst the ruins of that political establishment of which he had been the last prop and the worthiest ornament, now made use of the last breath of his failing voice, and of his dying spirit (*une voix qui tombe et une ardeur qui s'éteint*), to protect, even at the risk of what little strength he still possessed, the head of the former and the honour of the latter.

He directed the whole defence with that happy mixture of prudence and firmness, of decision and of reserve, which he had so often displayed during his too short Ministry, with that authoritative language toned down by regard for individuals of which he was so perfect a master. Without having recourse to any vain flights of rhetoric, without any affectation of generosity towards those who, after having been his adversaries,

were now his very humble clients, without any display of false sensibility for their present lot or exaggerated fears as to their fate, he naturally took up his position between the conquerors and the conquered. He made allowances for the difficulty of the times with which the accused had had to contend, like a man who has himself had to encounter similar difficulties without having been able to surmount them; he gave them credit for an amount of devotion which was honourable in its very excess, and worthy of a better cause; he called on the Government to account for their victory, and to explain what use they intended to make of it. Without justifying or even excusing the fatal ordinances, he showed that, in strict justice, they did not come under the head of any legislative enactment directed against them, and that was strictly applicable to them. Without contesting the right of an oppressed people to resistance, he impressed all its consequences on us, and the first of them, which was this very trial of the ex-Ministers. What right had we to set ourselves as avengers of violated laws, by violating them ourselves? And, suddenly, in the first of his magnificent series of retorts, leaving the part of a defender for that of a judge of the judges themselves, and transforming the accused into accusers in the eyes of

posterity, depicting eloquently the perils by which we ourselves were assailed, and the prelude of which was already being announced to us by the increasing noise of musketry, he said to us, raising his voice :

‘ You are going to pass judgment on yourselves ; the decision at which you are going to arrive will settle the question whether the new establishment which you have undertaken to found, whether the monarchy in France, is going to enter into a new era in its history, or to become a prey to factions ; for France, this decision will have the interest of a prophecy and the force of destiny. Does the Revolution of 1830 wish to wind up its work with the death of its adversaries whom it has disarmed, and prepare its own ruin as did the first Revolution ? I need not fear this, for you will direct it and set it an example. Our manners are becoming more gentle, and every day philanthropy is making rapid strides forwards. A legislature is in the course of formation which, as far as times will allow, will reconcile the interests of public order with the aspirations of humanity. Already, for several months, our public squares have not presented the ghastly spectacle of the scaffold. No pressing interest, no real want, no possible advantage exists for our country which should again set in motion the axe

which is now happily idle. Has not everything been achieved since the day when the dynasty collapsed with the throne? Does not the immense sea, and events which are still more immense, separate it from you? What can France gain by the death of a man who was but the instrument of a power which is no longer in existence? Is that death intended to show her strength, which nobody contests? I am afraid that it might be suspected and looked upon as a sign of weakness were the Government to strike a victim who has no other protection but my feeble voice. France is surely too generous to crave for revenge. Gentlemen, this throne which has been overthrown, these three crowns which have been destroyed in three days, this flag which had existed for eight hundred years and was torn in an hour—is not all this vengeance enough for a victorious people? That vengeance has been wreaked in the midst of danger, justified by its aim, ennobled by courage; but the other would only be barbarous, for it would strike without justification a helpless enemy. Can the execution of a human being be necessary to ensure the triumph of the victor and to consolidate his work? Surely neither cruelty nor violence will preserve what force has acquired or regained, but rather the moderate and firm use of its new power, the security which such

moderation will engender, the prosperity which it will foster, the protection which the new order of things promises to those who submit, or who rally to it, those are the real elements of its preservation; all the rest are fatal elements, or rather illusions which are certain to destroy those who give way to them. You are laying the foundations of a new throne; do not let them rest on a soil wet with blood and tears. Do you think that the blood which you might ~~shed~~ now would be the last? In politics, as in religion, fanaticism produces martyrs, and martyrs are the cause of fanaticism. The efforts of those martyrs would no doubt be useless, and their mad attempts would be shattered against the strength of an indomitable will; but it is no small matter to be obliged to be continually punishing, and to keep up rigorous action by further acts of rigour. It is no small matter to accustom the eyes of the public to the sight of executions, and to harden their hearts against the agony of the victims and the lamentations of their families. Were you to strike such a blow you would open an abyss, and these four heads would not fill it up.'

When he had spoken these last words in solemn and prophetic tones, M. de Martignac turned towards the accused, and looking at them with respectful pity, he gave them up to us with an inexpressible mixture of grace and of authority.

Cicero himself could not have been ashamed of such action, gesture, and language. These were almost the last words spoken to France by those eloquent lips ; the next day the courage of the orator more and more ~~outra~~ his strength, and when the debates were over he went ~~home~~, never to leave it again till he did so in his coffin.

Having begun on December 15, about nine o'clock in the morning, and ended on December 21, at night-fall, the crisis had lasted seven whole days, the first five having been devoted to the reading of the indictment, and to the examination of the prisoners and of the witnesses, and the last two days, December 20 and 21, to the various pleadings, to the deliberation of the Court, and to the delivery of judgment. Daily the crowds which assembled at the door of the Luxembourg from the early morning increased in number, and became more noisy and menacing, during the course of the sitting ; and in the evening, they met again at the doors of the Little Luxembourg, where the prisoners were confined. If the National Guard, which was almost our only armed force, had not, to a certain extent, shared the feelings of the crowd, perhaps they might have brought it to its senses without much resistance ; but unfortunately this was not the case. It was even to be feared that instead

of repressing the riot, they would assist it if occasion arose. Moreover, M. de la Fayette was inclined by nature rather to employ persuasion than force against the masses ; one after another he had those summoned who were apparently the leaders of the different groups of the malcontents—students, workmen, and others—and uselessly pointed out to them the respect which is due to justice, whilst unfortunately sharing openly their dissatisfaction at the turn events were taking. M. Odilon Barrot, Prefect of the Seine, did also the same thing, preparing for himself and for us a near future full of difficulties, as I shall relate presently, and thus rendering the crisis of the moment more and more threatening every hour ; so much so, that the last day but one (December 21), the gate of the Luxembourg having been forced through mishap, the court and the staircases were suddenly invaded with loud cries, and the officer in command only just had time to have the President informed, who, in his turn, only had time to close the sitting.

The next day (it was the day of the *dénouement*) we were all in our places, as were also the National Guard, and its commander, M. de la Fayette. From nine o'clock in the morning, the crowd thronged all the streets which, from the river or the boulevards, from the

Pantheon or the Faubourg St. Germain, lead to the Luxembourg. The mob was now silent and now riotous, bursting out into wild shouts at the slightest incident, though restrained by expectation and by fear, and by conflicting wishes and different hopes. Farther off, and in nearly all the quarters of the town, numerous armed and unarmed groups were circulating with loud cries; they were dispersed without much trouble by the patrols, behind whom, however, they reformed at once; shots were heard on all sides, which sometimes even sounded so like regular firing that it was impossible to make out what it really was. Not one amongst us was absent the last time the names were called over, and nobody evinced either fear or the slightest hesitation. The evening before, when we were on the point of being invaded by a furious mob, and did not quite know what to expect when we went out, I did not see one look or hear one word which was not firm and resolute. When I remembered, during the whole of the sitting, the state of anxiety and moral oppression which had weighed on the House fifteen years previously at the trial of Marshal Ney, the contrast was striking. Then the fate of the prisoner was not doubtful, he was bound to die; the judges ran no personal risk; they perhaps did not even incur any



personal blame, in the eyes of their party, but their consciences were very much perplexed. The most ardent reactionaries felt in a certain degree the sting of remorse, and fear of the consequences ; those who were timid strove against their weakness, as they were ashamed of it ; those, on the other hand, who were too conscientious (and I was one of them) did not very clearly see what their duty was, and feared, if they should incline to the side of mercy, to sacrifice justice to policy. Now, on the contrary, there was no question about taking the prisoners' lives ; but we could not exactly foresee what might happen to the judges when we left, if we should fall into the hands of a furious mob excited by the first outbursts of rage. The evening before, our hall had been very nearly invaded ; several amongst us had been insulted or illused on leaving, and that because of the mere mention of the judgment which we proposed to render : what would then happen when we should be obliged to have it publicly proclaimed ? But nevertheless I repeat it, and I am glad to do so, we had made up our minds, our hearts were relieved from a great weight, our countenances serene.

About mid-day, when the mutual pleadings were over, and the moment had arrived for deliberation, M. Pasquier, having agreed on the matter with the

Minister of Justice, ordered that the accused should be taken from prison and re-escorted to Vincennes, where they would be informed of the sentence, whatever it might be.

That was a clever stroke. It would take the mob by surprise and rob it of its prey, though it might certainly, perhaps, let it loose rather more against the judges; but nobody thought of himself.

When the Minister of the Interior entered the Little Luxembourg unexpectedly to fetch the prisoners, the National Guard, who were in charge, thinking that they were going to be taken before the Peers for the last time, offered no resistance; it might, perhaps, have been otherwise if they had known or even suspected what was going to be done. The business was boldly and prudently carried out, but yet it nearly failed through soldiers of the National Guard being placed in the avenue which leads from the Luxembourg to the Observatory, instead of troops of the line; as the carriages drove past, there were loud murmurs, but they were going at a sharp trot, and it was too late to stop them. M. de Montalivet, on horseback, led the escort.

At three o'clock, the guns from Vincennes announced that the prisoners had entered that fortress; we only learnt then what had been done, and the action of the

President was universally approved. I had been acquainted with that decision in the morning, and M. d'Argout had confirmed it to me at the opening of the sitting.

The deliberation was grave and calm. One hundred and sixty-three Peers answered to their names; thirty-one excused themselves on account of illness, absence, or official duties. The prisoners were unanimously found guilty, and the votes were thus divided as to the punishment :

M. de Polignac	-	Death	- - -	24
" "	-	Transportation	- - -	128
" "	-	Imprisonment for life	-	24
M. Peyronnet	-	Transportation	- - -	68
" "	-	Imprisonment for life	-	87
" "	-	Simply as a first-class misdemeanor	- - -	1
M. Chantelauze	-	Transportation	- - -	14
" "	-	Imprisonment for life	-	138
" "	-	Imprisonment as a first-class misdemeanor	-	4
M. Guernon Ranville	-	Transportation	- - -	14
" "	-	Imprisonment for life	-	140

Without defining the crime of high treason, *ex professo* and generically, the judgment defined as such the crimes of which the prisoners had been guilty.

One of the preambles was drawn up in these terms :

‘Having regard to Article 7 of the Criminal Code,

which ranges transportation amongst *peines afflictives et infamantes* (ignominious punishments);

‘ Seeing that Article 17 of the Code provides that transportation shall be for life ;

‘ Seeing that Article 18 of the Code provides that transportation entails civil death . . . .’

In reality, this preamble was quite unnecessary. It was quite enough to refer to the 18th Article of the Code ; but, at critical moments, the most insignificant word sometimes carries weight; and in mentioning civil death, whose meaning and consequences the common people did not understand, it seemed as if the judges were yielding to the passions of the multitude. It was a pious fraud which I had pointed out in one of our preliminary deliberations, and which our President, who was possessed of uncommon tact, cleverly turned to good account when he drew up the sentence.

What strange vicissitudes the course of events brings about ! Under the Restoration, on about ten different occasions, I had attacked the absurd and hateful principle of civil death ; I had twitted the Ministers of the most Christian King with having, whilst abolishing divorce, persisted in retaining this shocking remnant of Roman law, which, even in Roman law, was a remnant of a rule which had fallen into disuse, and the chief

characteristic of which was to break the matrimonial bond and to outrage family feeling. How could I possibly have guessed that one day I myself should invoke this very principle, in order to save the heads of those very Ministers who formerly had refused to listen to me?

The close of the case, if not of the crisis, was not so violent as one might have expected. The deliberation was a long one. Acting, as we did, under the eye of the public, the result of every individual vote on each prisoner and each question, first as to guilt and then as to the penalty, would necessarily transpire. The unanimity of the Court on the question of criminality had its effect. The National Guard, which was on duty at the Palace, evinced its satisfaction, and communicated that feeling outside. When the crowd heard that M. de Polignac was sentenced to civil death, the first explosion of popular fury was tempered by feelings of uncertainty and of curiosity, as the double meaning had its effect; but as soon as it became known that the Ministers who had been sentenced had been taken back to Vincennes, and so secured against any plot that might have been planned against them, the more violent dispersed whilst uttering shouts of rage; but they *did* disperse: the moderate portion of the population alone waited to hear the reading and the explana-

tion of the sentence. The sentence was delayed, so that when, about nine o'clock, the doors of the Chamber were opened to the public, there were only the National Guards on duty, and about a dozen people who had remained out of curiosity in the lobbies.

This time, therefore, we managed to get out without violence, insults, or menaces. Fearing a repetition of the scenes of the evening before, or perhaps something even worse, I had taken my precautions. M. Royer-Collard, whose house in the Rue d'Enfer communicated with the garden of the Luxembourg, had most kindly offered me the key of a little side-door, which I accepted both for my own sake and that of such of my friends as might be desirous to avail themselves of it, which was only reasonable; but I had no use for it. We descended the grand staircase in a body, and slowly passed between the troops who remained in the Rue de Vaugirard and the adjacent streets, and only separated to reach our different dwellings. At midnight, order was everywhere restored; *the country was saved*, as our people say over and over again in times of revolution. On the present occasion that expression was the only fit one to use, for the country would have certainly been in danger if we had yielded in spite of the voice of reason and the wishes of humanity.

The crisis was over, but every crisis *leaves its mark behind it*,\* and that is another adage of the revolutionary régime. The very efforts which bring revolutions to a fortunate issue, generally more or less exceed their object, and, for that very reason, cause difficulties and troubles which have to be met at once; our new Ministry was not long in finding this out.

No one had been more sincere or more active in promoting the success of its efforts than M. de la Fayette, as Commander-in-Chief of the National Guard, and M. Odilon Barrot, as Prefect of the Seine; they were two noble and large-hearted men, humane and generous, but the very best have their weaknesses. Neither M. de la Fayette nor M. Odilon Barrot, although they rejoiced at the fall of our first Ministry, was satisfied with that of M. Laffitte, for they did not think it promised really to be more liberal than ours was; to speak more clearly, they did not like the new Charter which had been hurriedly drafted in 1830; they saw in it only another halting-place, which retarded our progress towards that semi-republican monarchy of which M. de la Fayette was the first to dream, being soon followed in this by M. Odilon Barrot. During the crisis, whilst constantly having interviews with

\* 'Laisse une queue.'

those who seemed to be the leaders of the riot—students, workmen, cadets of the Polytechnic School—whilst trying to talk them over and to calm them, they had not failed to share more or less their innermost sentiments, and with them to deplore the King's tergiversation, the timidity of his past and present councillors, and to give them to understand that as soon as the crisis was passed all would go on smoothly, and that rapid progress would amply repay them for their momentary moderation. From such hopes to actual promises, and from the latter to positive undertakings, the descent was easy, and there is every reason to believe that, more than once, La Fayette and Odilon Barrot allowed themselves to be thus carried away; and in fact they hardly denied it. On December 24, the day after our judgment was delivered, M. de la Fayette expressed himself thus in an order of the day to the National Guard:

‘That critical period, when all who intended to make capital out of disorder were to meet together to carry out their nefarious schemes, has been got over without disturbance. The Revolution has come out of this new trial free from any blot, and has belied its calumniators of all countries; the law has enforced its authority; the accused, whoever they may be, have been pro-



tected, and the sentence respected. . . . Business, like our duty, will reassume its ordinary course; public confidence will be restored and industry revived; everything that is possible has been done for the cause of public order, *and our recompense lies in the hope that everything will now be done for the cause of liberty!*

It is, therefore, not to be wondered at if on every wall were to be seen proclamations such as follows, for instance :

‘ But for the prompt restoration of order, liberty would have been lost. Now that order is restored, we are certain to have tranquillity and public prosperity; for the King of our choice, La Fayette, Dupont of the Eure, and Odilon Barrot, our friends, have undertaken on their honour that we shall have a completely free organization, whereas the Government are now trying to reduce the bargain for which we paid with our blood in July.’

Or else like this one :

‘ The patriots who have always been ready to sacrifice themselves for our independence are still immovable in the path of liberty; and, like us, they wish for large concessions to increase that liberty. But force is not necessary to obtain it; order will do it; and then we shall be in a position to demand a more Republican

basis for our institutions. But if these concessions are not granted us, the patriots, who are still what they were, and the students who marched with them, will summon you to obtain them for yourselves by force !'

After this, no one needs have been surprised at the incidents which followed.

The King having been in person, on horseback, to visit the twelve *mairies*, and to congratulate the National Guard on their behaviour, M. Laffitte thought he was doing wonders when, as a member of the House, he proposed to the Chamber of Deputies that similar thanks should be tendered to the troops and to the members of the public force, as also to the students of the three schools,\* thus calling on them to protest against the proclamations which had been imputed to them.

He quite failed to gain the aim he had in view.

The students repudiated these thanks in terms which were insulting to the Chamber of Deputies, and supplemented their proclamations by fresh ones.

M. Laffitte furnished the best explanations he could from the tribune, alleging that the repudiation had been disavowed since—which certainly was not altogether impossible, seeing that it was probable that the students

\* The Polytechnic, and the Schools of Law and Medicine.

of the three schools were not altogether unanimous—he, moreover, in a timid sort of way, had the following notice inserted in the *Moniteur* :

‘ The vexation which the agitators feel at the failure of their projects have led them to have recourse to new tactics, and to pretend that the Government has been yielding and making them promises. We are authorized to declare that such an assertion has no foundation in fact, and that the Government has made no promise whatever.’

But the matter could not rest there. M. de la Fayette was not the man to restrain his feelings. Rightly or wrongly, it was said that he had used somewhat arrogant and threatening language. It was said that he had announced that the Ministry was going to be modified according to the views of M. Dupont (of the Eure), that the House of Peers was about to be replaced by an Elective Senate, and the Chamber of Deputies dissolved and replaced by a new one, for which every citizen who paid any taxes whatever would have a vote. It is quite certain, however, that, on December 22, at the very height of this new crisis, at a meeting of thirty or forty deputies which was held in M. Laffitte’s drawing-room, M. Odilon Barrot drew a most terrible picture of the state of affairs. He denounced such a formidable conspiracy

for the overthrow of the Government, that he, as Prefect of the Seine, thought it would be impossible to check it at the first moment. He added that the conspiracy gained additional strength by the divisions which existed in the ranks of the National Guard, and that therefore these divisions must be stopped at once; and that there was only one way of doing that, which was to prepare an Electoral Bill on the very widest basis, and thus to enter on the path of democratic concessions.

It will be easily believed that all this obtained but a very small amount of credence in the Elective Chamber, although it created great indignation there. The titles of 'Mayor of the Palace,' of 'Citizen,' of 'King,' being proposed as an improvement upon those of 'Citizen King,' and of 'My Lord Protector,' were bandied about from mouth to mouth; and as this ill-feeling increased hourly, it was not long in bearing its fruit.

Whilst we, in fact, were deliberating at the Luxembourg, a Bill affecting the National Guard was being debated at the Palais-Bourbon, one of the principal clauses of which ran as follows:

'No Commandant may be nominated over the National Guard of a whole department, or even of a whole "arrondissement."'

This of course, *à fortiori*, suppressed, as a general principle, the supreme command of the whole National Guard of the kingdom with which M. de la Fayette, at that moment, was invested through the force of circumstances. He himself had more than once declared that such supreme command was incompatible with the rules of a Constitutional Monarchy; but when the Chamber by its vote hastened to seize the occasion which offered itself for showing its ill-humour, and, after some hesitation, accepted the proposal to retain, temporarily only, this exceptional state of affairs, allowing M. de la Fayette, later on, to retain the title which he had hitherto borne, but only as an honorary one, M. de la Fayette at once sent in his resignation to the King. This created a great sensation, and fruitless efforts were made to induce him to withdraw it; the turbulent threatened, the timid begged. As La Fayette insisted on the conditions mentioned above, the King reluctantly made up his mind to accept his resignation, and Count de Lobau, one of the glories of the First Empire, one of the Commissaries of the Hôtel de Ville during the first days of our revolution, accepted the post as his successor without any hesitation, with that calm firmness which he displayed in his political life just as he had on the field of battle.

Then came the turn of M. Dupont (of the Eure), who, at last dropping the sword of Damocles which he had for three months kept suspended over our heads, followed M. de la Fayette in his retirement, and was replaced by Mérilhou, who, in his turn, was replaced by Barthe.

Thus ended that new crisis.

The King had been threatened, first of all, with a terrible riot, and then with numberless processions between Paris and La Grange, where M. de la Fayette had pitched his tent. It was to be the counterpart of what had happened between M. de Choiseul and Chanteloup, but it turned out to be a vain hope for one side, and vain fears for the other. It ended in an explanation in the Chamber of Deputies, and that only incidentally (on December 22), and on the occasion of a quite insignificant proposal.

M. Laffitte's language was moderate, but more firm than his own character; M. Odilon, without abandoning his friends, protested against all the imputations which had been brought against him; M. Dupont did the same a week later; and the year came to a peaceful close, but not without leaving traces and germs of agitation behind it, which were to crop up again the next year, right well vivified and fructified.

## V.

## THE EARLY PART OF 1831.

BEFORE resuming the thread of our internal affairs, it will not be amiss to recall very shortly some of the most important contemporaneous events.

At the proper time I mentioned the Belgian revolution, which followed about three weeks after ours (July 29, August 25); I rapidly sketched its origin, its causes and its vicissitudes at the beginning; how we protected it diplomatically against the eventual consequences of the Treaty of Vienna, and by a threat of military interference against a Prussian invasion; and lastly, how we agreed with the English Government to set it afloat, by handing over the dispute between the King of the Netherlands and his victorious subjects to the arbitration of the Conference which had been sitting in London for several months to settle the affairs of Greece.

We had no sooner proposed that solution of the difficulty, when the first act of the Conference was to order a suspension of hostilities between the two belligerents.

The respective troops of the two countries were mutually to withdraw, within the space of ten days, behind the line which, before the treaty of May 30, 1814, divided the possessions of the Sovereign Prince of the Netherlands from those which had been joined to his territory to form the kingdom of the Netherlands.

This was indirectly to prejudge the very ground of the dispute, whilst affecting to leave it in suspense; it was provisionally to admit the decisions of the insurgent Government, which, as a matter of fact, was already master of all the fortified places, with the exception of the citadel of Antwerp.

So much so, that less than six days later this improvised Government hastened to install, at Brussels, a Congress of Deputies, which it had summoned *ad hoc*, to receive from it the insignia of the executive power, and to assume its authority whilst waiting for the report of M. Van de Weyer on the negotiations which had been begun in London; then, without being informed of their result, the Congress, after eight days' debate, declared that Belgium was definitely severed from Holland and that the House of Nassau was deposed; it hastily drew up the outline of a constitution, and, a little later, tried to come to an understanding with France as to eventualities in the future.



It was not only in Belgium that the counter-stroke of our revolution made itself felt. Austria was arming, in spite of her apparent or real friendship, and perhaps as much on one account as on the other. Her forces were raised to 360,000 men, and numerous reinforcements were despatched to Italy and Galicia. Prussia and Bavaria could hardly restrain the agitation which was reigning in their Rhenish Provinces; the Duke of Brunswick, who had quarrelled with his subjects, and with his relative William IV., King of England and Hanover, and even with the Diet of Frankfort itself, on account of foolish acts which it is not worth while recalling here, had been forced to flee from his capital on September 7, leaving the provisional government in the hands of his brother. The King of Saxony had done the same thing, almost at the same time, in favour of his nephew Maximilian, after a violent rising, brought about by rather frivolous causes. The same was the case in the two Hesses, where the command of the troops charged with the duty of delivering the Grand-Duke—who was himself besieged in his Castle of Wilhelmshöhe by his own people—and of forcing him to accept a fresh constitution, was entrusted to Prince Emil, the Grand-Duke's brother; whereupon the Diet at last made up its mind, and, on October 4, published a decision whereby, after

November 5 next following, all the States of the German Confederation were to undertake mutually to support each other, so that where one of the States should address an urgent request for help and assistance to one of its neighbours, this help should be accorded it without delay in the name of the German Confederation.

In order to attain this end, the contingents of the Confederation were to be kept in readiness as long as the present crisis lasted, and the Governments of the Confederation were advised to keep the closest watch over all political publications.

By degrees these precautions restored tranquillity in German States; but it seemed impossible to extend them to the Province of Luxembourg, which was subjected to the jurisdiction of both the German Confederation and the kingdom of the Netherlands.

These troubles were nothing, however, compared to the storm which was gathering farther North.

Since the accession of the Emperor Nicholas to the throne, the liberal tendencies of his brother towards what remained of what was still affectedly termed the kingdom of Poland had openly been replaced by contrary tendencies. The Diet existed still, but its sittings were no longer public, and debate was scarcely allowed; there was no longer any liberty of

the press, nor any guarantee for the exercise of the Catholic religion, which was that of seven-eighths of the inhabitants.

Everything was subjected to the exigencies of a distrustful policy, which the Grand-Duke Constantine carried out with all the brutality of his character, besides insolently refusing any reform in the present, or any hope for the future. In this state of affairs our tricolour, the flag under which the poor Poles had so long and so bravely fought, suddenly appeared over the French Consulate, and made every heart beat at the memories which it recalled. It was like an electric shock, and caused a silent but profound ferment in all men's hearts, so that it only needed a spark to set everything in a blaze. That spark came from the Grand-Duke himself.

It was in November, when, a number of young cadets of the Military Academy, who had met together at a friendly banquet, having ventured to sing some patriotic songs, and to toast the memory of old Kosciusko, the Grand-Duke had them arrested, and, in his wisdom, decided that they should all be knouted.

Then the conflagration became general.

'On the 29th, at eight o'clock in the evening, a body of their comrades, armed with swords and pistols,

broke out of the Academy, and proceeded to the Belvedere, the Grand-Duke's residence. They surprised the sentries, and forced their way into the apartments, killing everyone who opposed them. Lieutenant-General Gendre, and the Subdirector of the Police, Lubowicki, were the first victims, and the Grand-Duke had only time to make his escape by a secret exit and to take refuge amongst his guards.

'The rest of the Academy, followed by a crowd of people, had gone to the barracks of the Lancers of the Guard, who resisted their solicitations, and then to the barracks of the fourth regiment of Polish infantry, which immediately rose against its officers, of whom several were massacred; the insurgents were joined by a battalion of Sappers, and by the greater part of the Grenadier regiment and by the Horse Artillery, amidst loud shouts of "Long live liberty! long live our country!"

'A few minutes later, the insurrection spread in a most alarming manner; the troops who had just declared themselves in its favour, and the people who followed them, went to the Arsenal, which was robbed of all the arms it contained, and these were distributed. The troops who were quartered there made very little resistance; those whom the Grand-Duke could get together and keep to their duty amounted to from eight to ten thousand

Russians or Polish soldiers, amongst others the Polish regiment of mounted Chasseurs. But these troops were no longer sufficient to check the outbreak. They were ordered to assemble in the Great Square, and forcibly to repel all who tried to oppose their progress. Several regiments of that corps, amongst others the regiment of the Volhynian Guard, were attacked by the fourth regiment of Polish infantry, which killed about thirty of them, but could not prevent them proceeding to the place of rendezvous. On the side of the insurgents, the whole night was spent in excesses inevitable in an outbreak the leaders of which are but subaltern officers; several generals and superior officers had been massacred at the commencement, or were killed in the various fights which took place afterwards; even more deplorable excesses, pillage, and murders which were attributed to revenge, marred this glorious and at the same time shameful night.

‘The next day, at daybreak, as the insurrection had invaded every quarter of the town, and left the Grand-Duke no hope of restoring order or of asserting his authority, he determined to evacuate Warsaw, and, without any opposition, went to the village of Wirbza, situated at about two or three versts from that town. There he established his bivouac, in the midst of such troops as

had remained faithful to him, and which then consisted of the Lithuanian and Volhynian Guards, of thirteen companies of the Polish Guard, and of all the cavalry and the foot artillery of that Guard. About eight or nine hundred Russians who had been isolated or taken prisoners were left behind in Warsaw.

‘ However, the insurrection had as yet no one either to lead or direct it. The soldiers and the infuriated mob gave themselves up to all sorts of excesses. They had hoisted and carried about the Polish and French colours together. The bank, which contained a very considerable sum of money from a loan and from the sale of public domains, was threatened, as was also every sort of property ; all the shops were closed, and the whole middle-class was in fear of universal pillage. In such a desperate position, the Administrative Council of the kingdom, seeing that it had no power or authority to re-establish order, thought it its duty to summon to its aid some persons whose popularity might restore public confidence, such as Prince Adam Czartoryski, Prince Radziwill, Michael Kockanowski, Count Louis Pac, Secretary of the Senate, Julian Niemcewicz, and General Chlopicki.

‘ When the Supreme Government had been thus modified, it issued a proclamation announcing that the

Grand-Duke Constantine had just ordered his troops to abstain from all ulterior intervention, and that the Poles alone could restore harmony to the divided opinions of their fellow-citizens. The Government went on to say : " You do not wish to present to the world the spectacle of civil war. Moderation alone can preserve you from those evils which threaten you. Let order be restored, and let all agitation come to an end with that fatal night which has thrown its veil over it. Think of the future and of your unhappy country, and get rid of everything that might compromise its existence. We must fulfil our duty and maintain the public security, the laws, and that constitutional liberty which is assured to the country."

' But, at the same time, meetings were being got up, composed of the most ardent patriots, of some deputies of the last Diet, and of those who had belonged to secret societies, who exclaimed against the impudent audacity of the late Government in claiming to retain power by granting concessions, which were now useless, to the popular party. Followed by a crowd which had become exasperated by their speeches, they went to the Government Palace, and forced the members of the former Council to give up their places to them.

' This was the end of the Russo-Polish Council. A

new Administration was at once formed, headed by Prince Adam Czartoryski, and to which Prince Lubecki, the only remaining member of the former Council, the members of the Diet, Ostrowski and Malachowski, and Professor Lewel, one of the most influential heads of the secret association, were summoned. The command of the troops and of the whole armed force was given to General Chlopicki, who was a resolute man about fifty-seven years old, who was much esteemed, who had been through several campaigns under Napoleon, and who had lived in retirement since Poland had been united to Russia. His first care was to calm the irritation of the troops, to arm a National Guard, and to restrain the turbulence of such factious spirits as wished for a complete revolution.'

I have copied this correct and interesting account word for word, in order to show beforehand to what difficulties this fresh incident might expose such a new Government as ours then was. I shall have occasion to refer to this more than once, and I shall also have occasion to point out, as I go on, what sort of improvised Government that unhappy so-called kingdom of Poland meant to impose upon itself under the very eyes of the three great robbers who had already three times shared its spoils between them.



By the way, I will mention that the Conference of London having, after many discussions, sealed the fate of Greece, delimited its frontiers, sealed its constitution, and offered the crown to Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg, encountered no difficulties in the way of its designs except the refusal of that Prince, who, changing his mind at the last moment, after having accepted at first, thus reopened the whole question.

I must also casually mention the popular agitations which had taken place successively in most of the Swiss cantons. As our disbandment of the Swiss regiments in the French service had not at all hurt the susceptibilities of the Swiss Confederation, but had, on the contrary, been very well received and looked upon as a signal of those changes which were so generally desired, and as these changes had been spontaneously and thus irregularly sketched out at Zurich, at Lucerne, at Soleure, in Argau, in Thurgau, and even in Berne, the Federal Directory soon decided to convoke a general Diet, the result of which was, on the one hand, the unanimous resolve to maintain Swiss neutrality, by keeping up the contingents of the cantons on the same footing as heretofore, and, on the other, that of allowing each canton to reform its own interior constitution as it pleased.

Nothing could suit us better than this.

So as to omit nothing, I must also casually mention:

(1) The death of Pope Pius VII., which took place on November 30, after a pontificate of only twenty months.

(2) The death of the King of Naples, Francis I., brother of our Queen, which took place on November 8; he had ascended the throne in 1777.

(3) The death of the Queen Mother of Portugal (January 7), which left the whole of the royal power to that little tyrant Dom Miguel, both as a matter of fact and also by law.

(4) The crushing fall (November 15) of the great Tory Ministry, at the head of which was the hero of Waterloo, and which succumbed owing to the errors of its leader.

‘*Nec quisquam Ajacem possit superare nisi Ajax.*’ \*

That event created too much sensation, the causes which brought it about, and the incidents which hastened it, are too well known for me to dwell on them, although we had a hand in the matter, for the Revolution of July, and the impetus it had given to the English nation, was the principal cause of that Ministry’s overthrow.

The internal disturbances in Germany, which had subsided for a moment, broke forth again with renewed violence. The Elector of Hesse, after having accepted

\* ‘For Ajax only could conquer Ajax.’—Ovid. *Met.*, xiii. 390.

the new Constitution which had been forced upon him, had also to submit to a co-regent, and left his capital in order to avoid having to live in the same town with him. The Duke of Brunswick had been regularly dethroned in order to make room for his younger brother. A momentarily victorious insurrection of the University of Göttingen in Hanover seemed as if it were about to break out anew. Political troubles in Switzerland showed themselves again, and caused the division of the Canton of Bâle, and also threatened the sovereignty of Prussia in the Canton of Neuchatel. In Poland, the deposition of the Emperor of Russia had been proclaimed, and the Russian army was preparing to cross the frontier. In Belgium, out of three candidates for the crown, namely, the Duc de Nemours, the Prince of Orange, and the Prince of Leuchtenberg—who had, very likely, been proposed without having been previously consulted, seeing that neither of them put forward the slightest pretensions to that throne, or gave the faintest hope that he would accept it—the Duc de Nemours had been chosen by a majority of 89 votes out of 191. In Italy, Cardinal Capellari was elected Pope, under the name of Gregory VI., and on the day following his election, the conspiracy broke out which was going to cause the whole of the Papal States to rise in rebellion.

Belgium caused us a great deal of trouble, for nothing was more difficult, in spite of mutual goodwill, than to make the Congress of Brussels, the Conference of London, and the Cabinet of Paris—if Paris possessed, at that time, such a thing as a Cabinet—work *pari passu*.

As regarded the definitive independence of the State of Belgium, the Congress had made up its mind beforehand. The Conference did not refuse, nor, as may be supposed, did we; but the Congress wished to impose conditions which the Conference could not accept, nor we either, and to which we found it impossible to accord any kind of support.

Both sides protested.

On its own authority, the Conference had settled the question of the boundaries between Belgium and Holland, and also decided to divide the National Debt. Protocol 12, which had been thrown out at Brussels, and been signed in London by M. de Talleyrand, our plenipotentiary, had been set aside in Paris, in accordance with the rules of *prétérition*.

Then arose the principal question as to who should be the King of the Belgians (for nobody would hear of a Republic). The Congress had decided by a majority that the Conference should not be consulted in the choice of the King, but that this choice should rest with the King of the French, seeing that Belgium was

anxious to secure a French prince ; but it was well known that, on this point, the Conference would accept no compromise, and that our King would never agree to make us accountable for the Belgian revolution. In order to force his hand, and so also that of the Conference, a threat was uttered to put a Beauharnais, and therefore a Bonaparte, whom Russia would protect, upon the throne. What could be done in such a strait ? After debating for six days, the Congress was obliged to vote, and the result was this :

Absolute majority	-	-	-	-	-	96
The Duc de Nemours	-	-	-	-	-	89
The Duke of Leuchtenberg	-	-	-	-	-	67
Votes lost	-	-	-	-	-	35

No majority.

Notwithstanding this, M. Surlet de Chokier was commissioned to go to Paris to offer a crown, which was hardly worth taking, to the Duc de Nemours ; but he only met with a flat refusal, tempered by the expression of our King's regrets.

In short, to increase and crown the embroglio, the King of Holland, backed up by the assent of the Conference, claimed to maintain his rights over Luxembourg, which formed part of the German Confederation, and to give it a form of government, in spite of the Congress of Brussels, which threatened in that case to break the armistice and absolutely to go to war.

## VI.

1831.

## THE MINISTRY OF MARCH 13.

It was in the midst of the crisis through which we were passing, and almost amidst the very heat of the irritation which our action in Portugal caused in England, that—if I may be allowed that digression—at the urgent request of M. Perier, I paid a flying visit to England. I, for my part, eagerly seized this opportunity, as, at that time, that country presented, owing to a course of circumstances similar in some respects, a spectacle which was almost as curious as that in our own. The Duke of Wellington's Ministry had just met with a crushing fall, and after thirty years of glorious but unsuccessful strife, and for a long time without even making any apparent progress, the Liberal Party, with Lord Grey's Ministry, had just raised the standard of Electoral Reform; all the Whigs, whether of old or new standing, responded to the appeal; even the heirs of Canning's policy supported the reform. My friend Lord John

Russell had just brought in a Bill on this subject ; that Bill was said to be rather too Radical in its tendencies, and, having been carried in the Commons by a small majority, it was thrown out in the Lords, and so Lord Grey, hoping to obtain a larger majority, appealed to the country. The elections had been fixed, and the turmoil was just beginning, when I arrived in London, *viâ* the Thames, on the morning of April 24, having left Paris on the 23rd.

As I have said, my journey had no personal object, and I have kept the text of the instructions with which I was furnished. Sebastiani, Minister for Foreign Affairs, had dictated them in my presence to M. Desages, the Director of the Political Department ; but they were only a matter of form. I was simply instructed to insist on certain points which were indicated to me, but the whole matter was to be carried out officially. M. Perier, however, in asking me to undertake this business, meant before all things to inform M. de Talleyrand fully of the position of our Ministry and of the state of our public affairs ; to acquaint him with those details and those personal views which despatches do not convey, and which private letters only half explain, when they come from the interested parties and only reproduce their thoughts ; but the time

was not well chosen. Here is what I have found at the beginning of my own correspondence :

‘London, April 25, five o’clock in the evening.

‘I have seen nobody as yet, except M. de Talleyrand and Madame de Dino, who received me with open arms. Everything here appears to be turned upside down, and it is said that since 1648 nothing like it has been seen, and that everyone is ready to spend his last crown-piece in the coming elections, which begin this week, so that I shall see something. It seems that they will be a sight not to be missed, as such an event will never happen again. All this preoccupies men’s minds to such an extent that very likely my journey will have no further result ; but I shall try. London appears to me to have increased in size, and to have improved and got more magnificent than it was eight years ago. It would be a pity were such a country to fall a prey to Jacobins, but I earnestly hope that Providence will interpose. It appears that there is much doubt as to the result of the elections ; each side is sanguine about the victory, but we shall see. I would rather be certain that we shall gain ours.’

What I foresaw happened. On the 18th I wrote :

‘I have seen nearly all the persons whom I intended



to see, and I fear my journey will be superfluous. All that I was instructed to do has been done without me, and I found everything settled on my arrival. I do not know whether it will all succeed, but in any case the affairs of France and of Belgium are of very little import here. The Reform Bill carries all before it, and nobody thinks of anything else, or will hear anything else talked about.'

And on April 29 I wrote :

'I have more of London than I know what to do with. In such a crisis, very little attention is paid to the affairs and to the government of France.'

Again, on April 30 I wrote :

'Nothing in the world could induce me to remain here, either as ambassador or in any other position. The turmoil is increasing, though it excites no real interest, and I do not think that it is possible for any official position to combine more magnificence with more tediousness than does that of our ambassador, and it is growing worse every year.'

Lastly, on May 1, I wrote :

'The elections are going altogether in favour of the Cabinet. I shall return very well satisfied with the manner in which I have been received by everyone, and especially by M. de Talleyrand; he could not

have been kinder to me than he was, and I conceived a higher idea of his abilities than I had formerly. Indeed, he could, if he pleased, teach others who pretend to know much more than he does: do not laugh, although this is almost what Madame de Sévigné said of Louis XIV., when he asked her to dance with him.'

As I accomplished absolutely nothing, I can only relate what I saw. I only witnessed the elections in London, for it was impossible to get into the outskirts—there were no horses to be had, there was no room in the inns, and all the public conveyances were crammed inside and out; but I went to the hustings in every electoral district, and I heard the candidates speaking against each other with mutual insults and amidst much interruption, though the whole affair was one of tradition and of party feeling. Electoral contests were, indeed, carried on on a very different scale, and quite in real earnest, in the good old days of the Foxes and of the Pitts, between Whigs and Tories of the old school, and the present question of Reform, however burning it was, hardly made up for the manly excitement of which the improvement, or rather the effeminacy, of modern manners had deprived English elections.

M. Van de Weyer, who was then the Belgian envoy in England, and who had known that country for a

long time, drew my attention to that fact, and he was kind enough to accompany me in my little excursions. He said: 'I take my little son with me, so that he may see now, what he will not see when he is grown up;' and this was corroborated to me by two men belonging to opposite parties, and thus all the more reliable.

Being at dinner one day at the house of my old friend Lady Jersey, who had formerly been a Whig, but who had become a very ardent Tory since her family had been allied with Sir Robert Peel's, she said to me aloud, before several of our mutual friends who were Whigs:

'All the noise which you hear is only assumed; it is nothing but mere pretence. The Cabinet sides with the mob, and is itself the mob!'

The next day, at Holland House, I mentioned this to my host, who answered with his keen and genial humour:

'Oh, in the good old times the mob was the mob, and nobody was frightened at such a small matter.'

It is very possible that this change for good or ill, as one looks at it, in the popular mind may have contributed to reconcile the timid and recalcitrant party of the superior classes to the ideas of reform, and thereby paved the way

for what had been planned for a long time; but there are reforms and reforms, and supposing, which no sensible being then doubted, that it was needful to take a step in advance, and even a long step, yet it did not follow that the step might not be a dangerous one, and that the Bill of my friend Lord John Russell might not go beyond prudent limits.

I wished to be enlightened on this matter. At that time I loved England as the Ultramontanes love Rome: I regarded it as my second fatherland; and as everybody knew this, I was well received in both camps, by Lord Bristol as by Lord Brougham, by Sir Robert Inglis as by Sir Robert Wilson.

Thus I asked questions right and left, and I even took the liberty to submit my doubts and my apprehensions, with proper diffidence, to the lord of the ascendant, Lord Grey, in his own sanctuary in Downing Street. With his natural gravity and his customary kindness towards me, he replied: 'We must avoid as far as possible any great change in the established order of things—we must wait patiently; as far as we can, consistently with honour and security; but when the moment comes, *age quod agis*.' He had said this very same thing to me ten years before (1822), when there

was no question either of Revolution in France or of Reform in England.

Lord John Russell was more explicit and no less peremptory towards me. He freely allowed that his Bill exceeded the demands and even the expectations of the Whigs, but, he added, 'that is only a matter of prudence. The proposed reform must be carried at once and for once; it must put a stop to all idea of future reform for a long time, unless we wish to live in a state of perpetual agitation and of constant crisis.'

His intentions were no doubt good and worthy of a statesman, but it remained to be seen whether he would attain his object, or even whether he was taking the right road to attain it; but I very soon knew what to think about the matter.

I had for many years been very intimate with Mr. Hallam, who was then the greatest living publicist in England, if not the greatest she had ever possessed—a man of profound learning, of extraordinary sagacity, of almost infallible penetration—a man whose mind was as free as it was liberal—a Whig without party prejudices, with a resolute mind and a sound judgment, and a man who had thoroughly grasped and followed out the delicate and complicated mechanism of the English Constitution from its very beginning, going into

its slightest details and historical vicissitudes. M. Royer-Collard used to say, with his original and expressive *verve* : ‘ Hallam is not a man, he is an eye ; for nothing escapes him, nothing disturbs him, and everything enlightens him.’ Royer-Collard was never tired of reading Hallam’s articles over and over again.

Of course I called on that remarkable man as soon as I arrived, but I did not find him at home ; a couple of days later, I met him at the British Museum, and as I knew from public report that, though he was a friend of Reform on principle, yet he did not think highly of the Bill which was about to be brought in, I expressed to him my desire of talking the matter over with him. ‘ I shall be very glad to do so,’ he replied, ‘ and to-morrow Lord Lansdowne is coming to breakfast with me very early ; come and meet him, and we will have a chat.’

I carefully kept the appointment, and the next morning, at eight o’clock, I was there when Lord Lansdowne entered the noble library of our friend. After the first exchange of words between the speakers (for I was only present as a friendly listener), I clearly saw that our little meeting was a settled affair, and no matter of chance. Lord Lansdowne, without being the head of the Cabinet, ranked very high in it, and no

doubt wished to reconcile to this Bill a writer whose opinions carried great weight. I also saw that he kept on the defensive, for at the tenth sentence the apothegm of the author of the Bill was introduced, *i.e.*, that with regard to electoral reform it was most sensible to go as far as possible at once, so as to have done with it once and for all. I saw that that was the practical argument between men who understood each other at the merest hint, and who had no time to lose in talking commonplaces, or in wrangling and quarrelling about trifles.

‘I fully understand,’ said our wise Mentor, ‘that every system of electoral reform which proceeds *à priori*, which makes a clean sweep and builds up an altogether new system, runs a great risk of being down an incline where there is no chance of stopping, as any halt is only arbitrary. Every restriction on the right of voting rests necessarily on the presumption of the incapacity of the electors, which must always be too uncertain and varied not to be open to discussion. Naturally those who are excluded object; and as they are in proportion by far the larger number, we must expect to see all who are shut out, on whatever pretext, together sapping our institutions, by degrees, from the same reasons and with the same amount of success,

until we have Universal Suffrage, which must come sooner or later; and as that means nothing less than the sovereignty of the majority, where all are on a footing of perfect equality, if ever that majority gets into power, it will make short work of any remnants of inequality—I mean Royalty and the House of Lords.

‘But as the danger is only too real, I ask you whether it will be any remedy to run headlong into it, and, from the very first, to clear the first steps at a bound ourselves, in the hope that the last step but one will save us from falling to the bottom altogether? Do not think it, for when once the impetus is given the motto of the agitators for reform will be :

“*Nil actum reputans si quid superesset agendum.*”\*

‘I do not find fault with the new Bill on the score of its being too democratic, although it is decidedly so; but because it is so uniformly, systematically, without regard to precedents, or circumstances, or to the position of affairs, and because it imposes without distinction the level of a unique principle expressed in round numbers on all localities and on all bodies of men. Nothing is more contrary to the spirit of our Constitution, for our institutions have never been flung at hap-

\* Not to consider anything is done as long as anything remains to be done.



hazard into the crucible and recast in a mould previously agreed upon. Even in the greatest changes which have been effected, the established order of things, the wisdom of our ancestors (whether they were wise or not is another question), and respect for vested rights have always been taken as the point of departure, whether it were to extend them or to restrain them, to redress or to rectify existing circumstances as the course of events might require. Our history is little besides a series of compromises, of transactions between the past and the present, between what has come to an end and what is only just beginning, between something quite new, and what we have been accustomed to. By acting thus, one sees what one is doing and where one is going, so as not to keep constantly the people in a state of excitement as regards what they consider their claims, and also so as not to impose on ourselves those absolute rules, the bearing and working of which it is quite impossible to foresee. It may be that our legislature has been travelling this road too timidly and too slowly up to the present time ; and that it is right to admit more largely to the franchise, and to strike more boldly at abuses, no one can doubt, but only on the condition that we see clearly each step before us.

‘ Another danger, and not the least which we shall

incur by thus discussing the validity of existing institutions and trying to build up new foundations for society, is that it may excite more fear than it will do harm, that we shall, thereby, assume a false revolutionary air, and thus frighten not only timid men, but those who really feel well disposed to the cause ; it will, moreover, and inevitably, put the House of Lords, whose assent is indispensable to the Bill, on their mettle, and, perhaps, in spite of themselves, bring them face to face with an unfortunate alternative. The Upper House threw out the Bill altogether—apparently that was to be expected ; but who can tell, if it had been introduced with less noise, in a more moderate form, based on precedents in the past, and carefully reduced to its essential limits, it might not have met with better treatment ? This very same Bill is now to be introduced into the House of Lords again, and the increasing popular agitation, the noise of the present elections, and even, in case of need, the creation of an indefinite number of peers, are relied on to pass the Bill. This, which almost amounts to a *coup d'état*, would be fatal were it to be carried out even as a threat ; it would be the finishing blow to all that remains to us, even of a pretence of a balance of power, for already the Crown with us possesses hardly any other power but moral authority. For more than

a century, it has renounced all right to exercise its prerogatives in opposition to the wishes of the two Houses, and nobody would advise the Sovereign now to risk trying to do so. If, now that the House of Lords has, in its turn, reached the same state of decadence, if it has lost all effective authority and only exists in theory, and if our so-called Conservative body has nothing to preserve—if, in order to force its hand, it is sufficient to threaten it in all that constitutes its dignity and privileges, what will remain in the future of our good old British Constitution ?

‘ Nothing but the House of Commons, which would thus be the only power, real and effective, in the State, the only duty of the Upper House being to register the decrees of the Lower one, and that of the Crown to execute its sovereign will.

‘ And this omnipotent House, in fact, if not in law, what will it be itself ? If the new Bill turns out what it promises to be, it will be the faithful but exclusive representative of the middle classes, that is, of the *tiers état*, of Great Britain. In this Bill, nothing is neglected to exclude all direct or indirect influence of the Crown and of the constitutional aristocracy from future elections. There is to be no other difference between the various electoral bodies than that which proceeds

from geographical position or the number of inhabitants. In every constituency, everything depends upon the majority, and there is no chance for rising talents or purely personal merit. A House composed thus will be very fit to direct our domestic interests, and to carry on our home policy wisely and intelligently ; but our great and true policy—that which applies to the whole globe, where England occupies such a high position—to the Continent of Europe, which expects her support and gives her its own in return—to the Powers who are sharing or disputing the empire over it—into what hands will it pass when those who have directed it up till now find themselves systematically dispossessed, when those classes which possess most wealth, enlightenment, and leisure have in fact, if not in law, lost all share in public business, and will only be regarded with feelings of jealousy and mistrust by the others ? The Press, without any guidance and with no counterweight, will then by its influence dispose of our great foreign interests, whilst an active and industrious House of Commons, devoid of lofty instincts, general views, and foresight, will carefully watch over our petty daily interests. If a new French revolution breaks out anywhere, who will protect the principles of human society against the enterprises of a new Convention ? If a new Bonaparte

aspires to universal monarchy, who will oppose him, and guarantee the independence of States and the liberties of nations against him ?

‘ We must make no mistake. In order that England may maintain the position which she occupies and the ascendancy which belongs to her, she must have at her head a real Parliament, consisting of three powers which are really, though within proper limits, independent of one another, and yet closely connected together by their very nature: an elective Chamber, where the aristocracy being admitted, within certain proportions, will enlighten and guide the activity of the democracy; an hereditary Chamber, which, being constantly recruited from the ranks of the prominent members of the democracy, infuses new life and energy into it, so as to impart to it fresh activity; and an Executive Council in which the Sovereign, drawing free help from this double source, mediates between rival impulses and opposing interests.

‘ In order that the balance may exist between these different powers, it must first of all exist in each of them separately, and every social element must have its share in it, by finding its level. To this mechanism, which is no doubt still imperfect, but which has sufficed up to this present time, and which is the

work of time and circumstances rather than of the wisdom of our fathers, our excellent Constitution owes its force and stability through the many vicissitudes of our history. A sensible system of Reform should aim at maintaining it, at completing it, at purifying it, and at freeing it from the abuses which fetter or deprave it; to upset it would be the beginning of a revolution.'

I regret to say that I forget what was the answer to these weighty and serious words, but that shows that I was not much struck by it. I must also add that as I omitted, on leaving, to write down the conversation, I am obliged, after an interval of thirty years, to alter its external character, and to reproduce what was only a dialogue, interrupted by objections, answers and replies, as if it had been a continuous speech. I should not even dare to assert that, writing as I am doing now from memory, some personal ideas of my own may not have found their way into my account without my knowing it; but I am quite sure that it is correct in substance, and I fear that later events have, in more than one respect, proved that the adversaries of that Reform, which began then, and does not seem to have reached its aim yet, were in the right.

The close of the year 1831 was marked by a very important modification to our Constitution. On De-

cember 28, after a debate which lasted a whole week, a Bill relative to the abolition of hereditary peerage was brought in and carried in our House by a majority of 34 votes. M. Perier, the father of that Bill, which quite displaced the balance of the public powers in France, did not, like Lord Grey, rest satisfied with uttering the threat: he carried it into execution.

## VII.

1832.

## THE MINISTRY OF THE THIRTEENTH OF MARCH.

I TOOK no part in the disgraceful discussions which arose from the proposal to erect the Church of St. Geneviève into a Pantheon intended to receive and to hallow the ashes of those swarms of great men which suddenly crop up and rise to fame in a day, in times of civil trouble, a proposal which was nothing but foolish and empty twaddle, and which almost ruined the fame of Benjamin Constant's name, in whose honour it had been brought prominently forward, whilst it failed on account of all the evil reports, grounded or not, that used to circulate respecting him.

No political debate of any importance, at least none in which I was called to take part, marked the close of the first session of 1832, which came to an end in the Chamber of Deputies on April 12, and in our House April 21.

It was almost on that very day, that, with the assent rather than with the encouragement of the old King



Charles X., and of the little old Court that lived with him in the old Castle of Holyrood, the Duchess de Berry prepared to try a *coup de main* on our southern shores, in the foolish hope of causing a rising in Brittany and in Vendée. Having lived for some time, in default of a better place of refuge, at the Court of the Duke of Modena, who was the only Italian Prince who would not recognise our new Government, she embarked from the shore of Via-Reggio, in the Duchy of Lucca, and hoisted her flag, as future regent of France, on a packet-boat which was ostensibly chartered for a passage from Barcelona to Gibraltar, a small vessel, whose name of *Carlo Alberto* may perhaps be preserved in the history of our time, if we ourselves are allowed a small place in it.

It is well-known what sort of a reception that skiff of ill-omen, which carried the fortunes of our country, met with when it first appeared on our shores; how its feeble crew, quite in keeping with this escapade, had hardly time to land (April 29); how an attempt to cause a rising which was foolishly puerile was foiled without striking a blow (April 30); how the Princess was obliged to pass through all the country between Marseilles and Vendée in a thousand disguises, and how she was received there by a handful of faithful adherents who were as foolish as she was. It is well known what were the consequences of this; but, at the

time, I knew nothing more about it than everybody else knew, and I thought no more of it than did the best servants of the defunct legitimacy.

We were, however, threatened, or rather we were attacked, by much greater dangers.

The cholera, after having for two years desolated Russia, Poland, Hungary, Germany, and England, broke out in France, and quickly infested nearly every quarter of Paris. On the 9th of April alone it carried off eight hundred and sixty victims. On the 6th, M. Perier, visiting the Hôtel Dieu with the Duke of Orleans, felt the first attack of the malady; a few days later his colleague, M d'Argout, was dying of it. M. Perier was soon obliged to entrust his portfolio to M. de Montalivet, the youngest of his coadjutors, in order that a post might really be filled, which had now but a nominal occupant. His lofty intellect, far from growing weaker, rather threatened to reach that excited state that verges on madness. That was the grievous effect of the disease, and, dreadful to relate, that effect was not limited to the individuals, it also reached the masses: those whom the disease had struck as well as those who merely went in fear of it. The lower classes believed that they were being poisoned, and each political party imputed the crime to their adversaries; the authorities themselves were not free from this horrible suspicion,

and were not ashamed of giving way to it. This is the only manner in which the instructions which M. Gisquet, Prefect of Police, addressed to his subordinates can be explained, and which were published on April 2. 'Such imprudence was soon to bear its fruit,' says the learned and faithful historian of that period. 'The fear of being poisoned led to wholesale murder. Men belonging to the working classes used to keep watch in the streets, and to search all who passed them. Everyone who carried a phial, or a parcel, or who went near a provision-shop, was suspected. For a gesture, often for a look, he was set upon, illtreated, and tortured; and when he had succumbed, his dead body was dragged into the gutter, or torn to pieces by the maddened populace. It would take too long to give a list of all the victims of this murderous fury. A respectable employé was stopped in the Rue Saint-Denis and murdered. A medical man and a sanitary inspector who were going along the Rue la Fayette were assaulted, and owed their safety only to the fact that they were close to some barracks, in which they took refuge. Two unfortunate wretches were thrown into the Seine from the bridge of Arcola. A man who was pursued in the Place de Grève, having taken refuge in the guard-house at the Hôtel de Ville, was dragged out of there, disembowelled, and his entrails were devoured by dogs.

Another, who was suspected of having thrown poison into the jug of a man who kept a drinking-shop in the Rue du Ponceau, was carried to the *mairie* in a dying state. Other murders, not less horrible in their details, were committed in the Faubourg Saint-Antoine, on the Place de la Bastille, in the Faubourg Saint-Germain, on the Boulevard Saint-Denis, and near the Halles. It was like an homicidal epidemic which, for several days, was grafted on to the pestilence.

‘Under the impression of so many misfortunes Paris had become silent and dismal. The common people, who always poetize their great misfortunes as well as their great joys, had placed a black flag in the hands of the statue of Henry IV. on the Pont Neuf. One only met in the streets with disconsolate faces, and with people dressed in mourning. Here a dying person was being conveyed to the ambulance on a stretcher. There came a black-painted van carrying a heap of coffins, easily discernible through the curtains. The undertakers being unable to meet the ever-increasing demand for their conveyances, it became necessary to resort to ordinary vans. Biers also becoming scarce, many bodies were buried with no other covering than a piece of stuff. . . Everybody was panic-stricken, and those who were not detained in Paris by the

duties of their position, hastened to escape from the dangers of the epidemic by flight.'

The royal family, however, did not leave Paris in the midst of this general desertion.

The scourge reached its height at the very moment when the Session was drawing to a close. Even those who were not attacked suffered great inconvenience from the sanitary regulations under which the town was placed. The hospitals were crowded to overflowing with patients, and on some days the number of victims was simply terrible. Whether rich or poor, young or old, nobody was safe from attack. Yet a calm and courageous feeling of resignation had taken the place of the first momentary terror ; acts of devotion of all kinds were performed, and every public virtue was practised in the midst of perils which were a thousand times greater than those of the battlefield ; and this bearing of an immense population whom death was decimating is worthy of notice and of admiration.

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